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UNSTORIED IN HISTORY

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UNSTORIED IN HISTORY

PORTRAITS OF SOME FAMOUS WOMEN OF THE 16th, 17th, AND 18th CENTURIES

By

GABRIELLE FESTING

Author of "John Hookham Frere and his Friends"

"Samples of womankind; but here they be"
—*The Antiquary*

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To H. S.

PREFACE.

THE material for these sketches has been drawn from many different sources. No statement has been made without foundation, although it has seemed inadvisable to encumber every page with footnotes giving the authorities.

The Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission were the chief sources for Lady Bridget Manners' love-story, and for the ladies of the Restoration in IV. (Report XII., Appendix 4, and Report XII., Appendix 5, and Appendix 9).

Brilliana Harley's letters to her son Edward have been printed by the Camden Society; other letters, addressed for the most part to her husband, are to be found among the mass of Harley correspondence in the possession of the Duke of Portland, published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission (Report XIV., Appendix 2).

Lloyd's *Memoirs of Sufferers for King Charles I.*, the *Mercurius Rusticus*, and Eliot Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers* were my authorities for Lady Arundell of Wardour; the story of Lady

Savile's defence of Sheffield Castle is to be found in Miss Foxcroft's *Life of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax.* The *Mercurius Rusticus* gives the best account of the siege of Corfe Castle, and additional touches are supplied by the *Mercurius Aulicus*, and by Lloyd, whose memoir of Sir John Bankes is written with great respect and sympathy; Hutchins' *Dorset* (third edition, edited and revised by William Shipp and J. W. Hodson), Lysons' *Middlesex*, and other county histories have been consulted, as well as a most interesting little book, *The Story of Corfe Castle*, by the Right Hon. G. Bankes, which contains most of what is known of Brave Dame Mary. Sir Jonah Barrington is entirely responsible for the adventures of his great-aunt, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, of Castle Moret.

For the earlier years of Governor Pitt's stormy life, and the story of his great diamond, Sir Henry Yule's notes to *The Diary of William Hedges* (Hakluyt Society) have been the chief source; the bulk of his correspondence from about 1700 is to be found in Report XIII., Appendix 3, of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. Lady Russell, in her recently published work on *Swallowfield and its Owners*, has evidently drawn from the same sources, but her estimate of Pitt is less favourable than that which is here offered to the reader. Mrs. F. Penny's interesting history of Fort St. George gives many curious details of the life led by the members of the East India Company in Madras.

For the letters and other MSS. of the two Ellenor Freres I am indebted to the kindness of Miss A. and Miss S. Frere, who allowed me access to their store of family papers. The greater part of the history of the elder lady appeared in *Temple Bar Magazine* for June, 1900, under the title of "A Spinster of the Eighteenth Century," and is here reproduced by kind permission of the editor.

A few sentences of II. and V. appeared in *The Pilot*, in two articles entitled "A Puritan Heroine" and "The Founder of a Family."

In quoting from letters I have reluctantly been obliged to modernise the spelling. Although this detracts to a great extent from the charm of the originals, in many cases a literal reproduction would have been unintelligible to the ordinary reader. For instance, one sentence written by Lady Bridget Manners to her mother runs as follows:—"She sath she wold have my chamber fyne when I wear at London, and if it pleas your Ladyship to send me such things, the shall by the grace of God be very well loaket too." A hundred years later Lady Campden writes to her daughter, Lady Roos: "The Queene is saye to be displeased with her Treasery, my Lord Claringdone, who has as yet past noe accounts to the Queene of her revenue; with which she is much dissatisfied, and the Queene has pubglety touke notes of it to my Lady Claringdone pubglety at Corte." Some portions of Lady Harley's beautiful letters to her son are quite incomprehensible until

they have been pronounced, syllable by syllable and transliterated. The spelling of the two Ellenor Freres has, however, been left unchanged, as it approached sufficiently near to modern standards.

I have to thank Mrs. Lowe, of Gosfield Hall, for her assistance, and also Miss L. M. Festing.

To the unwearying patience and readiness to give help of the officials of the London Library I owe many grateful acknowledgments.

If it be permissible, I should also like to thank those many unknown friends — reviewers and others—whose kindly welcome of *John Hookham Frere and His Friends* gave so much pleasure and encouragement to the author.

GABRIELLE FESTING.

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UNSTORIED IN HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a certain indefinable charm in turning over a packet of old letters. The writers may have been quite unknown to us, they may have been laid in their graves long before we were born ; yet as we read their story—written, of course, without a thought of publication, only for one pair of eyes to read—they take vitality and flesh and blood, and become as human as ourselves. A singer of our own day has shown the strange irony of fate, that a fragile toy of chicken-skin and ivory should survive the wear of years, the dangers of several revolutions, and remain unblemished, while the beautiful, imperious hand that wielded it has long ago mouldered into dust.

"But where is the Pompadour?—
This was the Pompadour's fan!"

So the sheets of paper on which men and women recorded their hopes and their fears, their joys

and their sorrows, their vanities and their amusements, may still be handled and touched; but the writers have vanished behind the curtain. Yet, after all, are they really gone away from us? As we turn over the rustling leaves it seems as though some subtle essence of their spirit had been left behind. As we grow more and more absorbed in the record of the thousand and one trivialities that do far more to make up human life than the dramatic events which occasionally disturb the peace of some of us, we begin to feel that the writers are the warm, living realities, and we the cold, pale shadows. *She* paid three hundred pounds for her grand dress to wear at the ball given in honour of a royal birthday, and all the other ladies were jealous of her;—can it be that the little feet that trod their measure so proudly in sight of the whole Court are now stiff and stark, pointing at the daisies? *He* was hurrying back to those who loved him, saved from all the dangers of battle and siege;—did he really fall victim to that deadly fever by the way, and was the little sister who waited his return among the English meadows the stately, white-haired lady who is one of the dim memories of our own childhood?

Except in rare cases we never learn to know our acquaintance; day by day we go in and out among them, and are no nearer to true sympathy and understanding at the end of seven years than we were in the beginning. But a few hours spent

among "dead letters" make us feel as if the writers were our own friends. Removed from us in point of time by, it may be, several centuries, they are so near in other ways that, could we meet them to-morrow, we should hail them with the confidence of long intimacy, and ask them of their concerns, or else hasten to pass them by, because, without having seen them, we know them, by their own showing, to be disagreeable companions.

When we have ourselves been allowed access to the original letters, and deciphered their contents with much labour and toil, the illusion is stronger; but it prevails even over the prosaic exterior of the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. Those heavy volumes, with their close type and yellow paper covers, seem the incarnation of all that is dull and matter-of-fact. Once examined, they prove to be a gold-mine, or a quarry whence any one who chooses may come and dig his materials. You may turn from the formal correspondence of statesmen, at a time when the fate of Europe hung trembling in the balance, to echoes of fashionable gossip, rumours of Court scandals. If you have no wish to read of wars and battles, you have but to take another volume, and find a love-story as romantic as any in a novel. There is abundance to suit all tastes; but it is in the raw state, and you must dig it out, cut and polish it for yourself.

I.

A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF RUTLAND
(*d.* 1595).

LADY BRIDGET MANNERS (LADY BRIDGET TYRWHITT)
(*d.* 1604).

I.

A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

SOME of the stories revealed to us in these Reports are tantalisingly incomplete; a momentary glimpse, a few hints, a chance allusion, and then no more, however we may search. At other times we are able to trace the whole life of some personage from its beginning to its end, without turning to any other source of information. The records of the Manners family preserved at Belvoir are singularly full and singularly interesting. From the days of the first Earl of Rutland—a man of rare discretion and ability, who was the adviser of Anne of Cleves during her brief marriage with Henry VIII., and yet contrived to keep his head on his shoulders—we can follow the different members of his family through their varying fortunes until some time after the accession of James I. Then there is a break; but with the Restoration we may begin again, and continue well into the reign of George III.

Some of the Earls and Dukes of Rutland were involved in serious affairs of State. The earl who

under Queen Elizabeth was Lord Warden of the Marches and Lord President of the North, or the duke who under George III. was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, must have enjoyed varied and harassing experiences. But if we leave the tangled web of politics to historians, and look for something of more human interest, it would be difficult to find a more curious illustration of the ways of those in high society in the latter years of Queen Elizabeth than the love-story of Lady Bridget Manners, eldest daughter of John, fourth Earl of Rutland.

In April, 1587, Earl John succeeded his brother Edward, whose only child was a daughter. Although the excessive death-duties of our own time did not then embitter the loss of a relative, yet the large sums perforce expended upon mourning must have crippled the fortunes of the successors. Black cloth had to be provided for the family, the household, and a certain number of persons on the estate; a number of poor folk equal to the years of the deceased's age had to be clothed; friends invited to the burial expected "blacks" for themselves and their attendants; open house was kept between the day of the death and the day of the funeral; and the inside of the church was veiled in black hangings. The new earl's bill to a woollen-draper on this occasion amounted to £898 8*s.* 6*d.*

Thanks to the late earl's care, the estate was said to be in better condition than at the time of his

succession, but it was now encumbered with the maintenance of two countesses-dowager. The one was Bridget, widow of the former Lord Warden; the other, Isabel, was the widow of Earl Edward and daughter of Julyan, Lady Holcroft, who was a redoubtable termagant. On the death of her husband, Countess Isabel showed herself a true daughter of her mother; her first proceeding was "to take the Castle and new stables to her use, and to lock all the doors."

Luckily for Earl John, he had friends at Court, Lord Leicester and one of the ladies-in-waiting, Mrs. Mary Ratcliff, being two of the most considerable; and the Countess Isabel received only "cold comfort" when she appeared to submit her claims to the queen. Lord Rutland, finding his star in the ascendant, was anxious to turn the tables upon his sister-in-law. Her only daughter was a ward of the Crown, and he wrote to beg the queen to have a care of her bringing-up and marriage, lest "this well-natured child" should be spoiled "for want of education which she cannot rightly have while she remains with her mother, who cannot hide the disposition that she inherits from *her* mother." This is heredity with a vengeance! Lord Rutland's real object was to secure the wardship for himself; but Lord Burghley dissuaded him from asking for it, assuring him that under the circumstances such a request would have a bad appearance, and would certainly not be granted. Lord Burghley had the

best of all possible reasons for this advice, since he meant to keep the wardship in his own hands, and was only biding his time. At present he was by way of being the earl's friend; but when the earl had followed his brother to the grave, Lord Burghley married Earl Edward's heiress to his own son, and supported the Countess Isabel and Lady Holcroft in their exactions upon the Rutland estates.

Earl John's brief tenure of his new dignity was harassed by perpetual litigation and trivial disputes over tithes, jewels, plate, wardships, and other property. In spite of his brother's reputed good management, there were debts on all sides, and in the midst of his troubles came a summons for himself and his countess to attend the funeral of the Queen of Scots, apparelled each in twenty yards of black material, and attended by three gentlemen, three gentlewomen, and sixteen yeomen, also clad in mourning. The unsettled state of the country and the musters ordered by the queen, together with certain feuds among the Nottinghamshire gentlemen, threw many additional cares on the earl's shoulders, and it was not wonderful that he broke down under the load of his troubles, public and private. In February, 1588, Lord Leicester sent him a physician, with many kind expressions of grief at his illness. Thomas Screven, the trusty agent of several successive Earls of Rutland, wrote to assure the dying man that the Lord High Steward had promised

to befriend his young son. It is to be hoped that this letter, dated February 26th, reached Belvoir in time to comfort Earl John's last moments, for on March 2nd the Earl of Leicester and Lord Burghley had consulted over "the will of the late Earl of Rutland," and were writing to express their grief at the loss of "so toward a nobleman for the service of God, the Queen, and the country."

Earl John's eldest son, Roger, was a student at Queen's College, Cambridge,—too young to fight his own battles against the harpies who seized this opportunity of making what they could from the estate of a fatherless boy. He had a powerful protector in Lord Leicester, who had been accustomed to write to the late earl as his "son"; but he lived far away, and had more important affairs to occupy him. At home the boy's chief defenders should have been his father's uncles, Roger and John Manners. John, by reason of his marriage with Dorothy Vernon, the heiress of Haddon, was a person of much importance, and Roger was the oracle to whom the family appealed in all difficulties. Viewed through the medium of these letters, Roger appears as selfish and worldly, shrewd indeed in counsel, but with too much readiness to avoid everything that might bring him into trouble or disfavour with the ruling powers. He and his brother John, although named as executors in the late earl's will, declined to act, and the widowed Countess Elizabeth wrote piteously to Lord Leicester and Lord Burghley

to complain that she, "a weak and sickly woman," was unable to cope with the business single-handed. Her condition might well have moved to pity. From the list of her husband's funeral expenses it can be seen that black was provided for the boy earl, his sister, Lady Bridget, "the two little ladies," and "the three young gentlemen"; and her youngest child was not born till the end of the following October.

Lord Leicester and Lord Burghley acted with remarkable kindness and wisdom, sending orders that the funeral expenses were to be lessened as much as possible by hastening the burial and reducing the number of persons to whom mourning was given. They set a good example by declining to accept "blacks" for themselves or for their servants; but, even so, over seven hundred yards of black materials had to be sent down from London by Mr. Screven, who complained that "the rate set down was very mean—meaner than has been at any funeral for many years." As a climax to the general discomfort, small-pox broke out in the Countess Elizabeth's house at Nottingham, and she wrote in despair to the Lord Treasurer (Burghley) to ask where her son should go. Lord Burghley's reply was kindly and sensible. He offered any help he could give to the lonely widow (whose brother had just declined to be her fellow-executor), and advised that the young earl should return to Cambridge, where his "honest

and discreet" tutor, Dr. Jegon, could be trusted to look after him.

Some of Earl Roger's letters to his mother are still preserved, and bear a strong resemblance to those written by schoolboys of this century. He wished for a nag to ride; but when one was provided by his mother it proved lame and quite useless. He was very anxious for some venison from Belvoir to bestow on his friends, and the countess sent him down a buck, which her son pronounced to be "naught, every bit." Finally, in a letter which will touch the heart of every mother of a growing boy, he entreats for some new shirts, "for I have very few, and those I have be so little that I cannot get them off and on." Countess Elizabeth was then hampered by a demand for her to pay half the expenses of the commission appointed to inquire into the conflicting claims on the Rutland estates. Lord Burghley had deserted her cause, having recently married his son to that "well-natured child" for whose education Earl John had been concerned. There is no record that any shirts were sent to Cambridge, and it is to be feared that in the midst of graver cares the poor boy's wardrobe was forgotten.

It has always been known as a difficult and thankless task to transact business with a widow surrounded by a large family of children, whether she is the controller of a great estate or whether she has gone without a fire in the depth of winter in order to purchase the rusty crape streamers on

her bonnet. Of all widows who ever tried the patience of a man of business, Elizabeth, Countess of Rutland, must have been one of the most exasperating. Helpless, lymphatic, irresolute, it needs little effort of the imagination to see her lying on her state bed hung with black, or sweeping about her rooms in all the trappings of woe, and replying to every application with a protest of her incapacity. Ill-health, doubtless, was a hindrance to her activity; and she was so pressed by claims, counter-claims, extortions, and exactions that she was obliged to sell her plate and jewels. Yet other women have battled against sickness and poverty for the sake of their children, and come off victorious. The brute instinct that makes the lioness or the vixen fight to the death for her cub was strangely deficient in Lady Rutland; she could write sentimentally of her "poor boy" at the mercies of his enemies, Lady Holcroft and Countess Isabel, but she was quite unsuccessful in providing for her "poor boy's" every-day wants. When the commission summoned her to produce certain important documents, she was perfectly unable to say whether she had them or not, "as my experience of reading them is little, and my understanding is less"; but when her son, growing to man's estate, wished to know something of his own affairs, she was equally unable or unwilling to explain them. When on rare occasions she resolved upon any definite action, it was sure to be an unwise one; and when disaster inevitably

followed, she was the first to protest her ignorance of the whole matter and disclaim any responsibility. Sheltered by a husband's care, under prosperous circumstances, she would doubtless have passed for a sweet, amiable woman. As it was, she was a trial to all who had to do with her while she lived, and her death caused little regret. One of harsher mould and more grasping disposition, such as the Countess Isabel, would have emerged from the struggle with far more credit to herself and far more advantage to her family.

Lady Bridget, Earl John's eldest daughter, had been old enough at the time of her father's death to be allowed eight yards of black cloth for her mourning-gown. The queen had once expressed a wish to have the girl as one of her ladies. A month before the earl's death, Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, wrote to assure him that her majesty had spoken very graciously of him, and asked after my Lady Bridget, and remembered her promise.

Whether the earl felt the gratitude that he was bound to express is more than doubtful. Mrs. Mary Ratcliff, his kinswoman, had probably told him something of the inconveniences of her life, and there are letters among the Manners correspondence which give no pleasing picture of the Court. "I am weary of the spite of the Court," complains Earl Edward's cousin, Lady Stafford, during his absence from London; while Mrs. Eleanor Bridges sighs, "The Court is as full of malice and spite as when you left

it." In point of morals, Elizabeth's Court was held to be greatly superior to that of her contemporary and rival, Catherine de Medici, while those who had served her predecessor, Queen Mary, considered it to have deteriorated woefully since that day. But a queen's wish was not to be flouted, least of all by one who had a suit against his sister-in-law, and Earl John cast about for the means of educating Lady Bridget for her future responsibilities. Finishing-schools for young ladies were then few in number, and well-born damsels generally completed their education by being received into some great household, where they learned needlework, music, household management, and deportment, with the aid of the "pinches, nips and bobs" which had been such conspicuous factors in the upbringing of Lady Jane Grey, and a sufficiency of blows from the long handle of the feather fan carried by noble matrons.

Mr. John Manners advised sending Lady Bridget to the Countess of Bedford; but before anything could be settled the earl died, and Lady Bridget herself was seized with some illness from which her recovery was slow. It was not until the June of 1588 that the Countess Elizabeth, having despatched her son to Cambridge, was able to give some attention to her daughter's future. Lady Bedford was still willing to receive Lady Bridget into her household, and the mother resigned all authority over her child in a letter which is almost exasperating

in its passive helplessness. Lady Rutland bewailed the insufficiency of the sum left by her husband for his daughter's maintenance, assured Lady Bedford of the girl's docility, and lamented that her education had been "barren hitherto," and that her one accomplishment—playing on the lute—had been almost forgotten "by her late discontinuance"—probably on account of her illness. Lady Bedford was requested to find a waiting-woman for Lady Bridget, as the countess was quite unable to do so, and to superintend the spending of her year's annuity, which had been given into her hands.

There is no saying how Lady Bridget relished the change from her mother's rule to that of Lady Bedford. Some of her letters—worse spelled than even those of her brother—still remain; but they may have been censored by Lady Bedford, who generally took the opportunity to send a message to Lady Rutland. Lady Bridget dutifully congratulates her mother on her safe delivery in October, and adds that Lady Bedford continues her favour towards herself. A little later, like girls of modern days, she is seized with a desire to beautify her room, of which her guardian approves. "My Lady of Bedford did bid me send to your Ladyship for a bed and for hangings for my chamber and a little plate to set off my cupboard. She saith she would have my chamber fine when I were at London, and if it please your Ladyship to send me such things, they shall by the grace of God be very well looked

to. She saith she hath a great care of me, as Mr. Boston can tell you."

Poor Lady Rutland, barely recovered from her confinement and in the thick of her disputes with the commission, wrote somewhat tartly to Mr. Screven to the effect that "she would have imagined that so honourably minded a lady as the Countess of Bedford would furnish Lady Bridget's room in her house." Then softening a little, she added that she would willingly send anything that was required if she knew the size of her daughter's room. She was much disquieted by hearing through Mr. Boston that Lady Bedford intended "to put Lady Bridget to the Queen." "I hope this will not as yet fall so, for Bridget has no acquaintance in that place, and is therefore most unfit for it."

While Lady Bridget's fate was undecided, her brother, the earl, came up to London, and stayed, as did most of his family, at the Savoy. His friends, as he wrote to his mother, showed him "many comfortable encouragements." The queen, "using him very graciously" (which, to judge from Elizabeth's ordinary mode of receiving a personable youth, may mean patting his cheek or tickling his neck), said she knew his father for an honest man, and for his mother, "although she knew her not, she had heard much good of her." The sight of the boy earl may have reminded the queen of her promise, for in July, 1589, Lady Rutland writes to Lady Bedford that she understands that Bridget is to be received

into the queen's service. Another lady had been so recently admitted that Lady Rutland owns that she had not expected the honour for her daughter. "But as it is the Queen's pleasure, I hope she will behave herself as shall be pleasing," wrote the mother pathetically. "I hope those that are wise will remember the estate of a fatherless maid, and that you will give her your advice as to what is most needful for her, because I myself am altogether inexperienced in the fashions of the Court."

Lady Bridget did not go altogether unprotected into a new world. She was accompanied by Mrs. Mary Harding, who seems to have been something between a friend and an attendant—perhaps a poor relation—who wrote bulletins of her health and behaviour to Lady Rutland. Mrs. Mary Ratcliff was kindness itself, and so was Lady Talbot, with whom Lady Bridget was already on friendly terms. As Lord Burghley had lately penned a letter of good advice to young Lord Rutland, Mr. Roger Manners now followed suit with various counsels addressed to "his niece, Lady Bridget Manners, of Her Majesty's Privy Chamber." After recommending daily prayer and other elementary rules of good conduct, he advised generally "that you be no meddler in the causes of others. That you use much silence, for that becometh maids, specially of your calling. That your speech and endeavours ever tend to the good of all and to the hurt of none." To all this the Earl of Rutland added a

sententious postscript to the effect that "My uncle has given you good advice and we will pray that you may perform it."

To judge from the verdict of their contemporaries, Elizabeth's ladies would have been the better for heeding these precepts. Experienced courtiers, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, compared them to witches who could do much harm and no good. Veteran diplomatists like Sir Francis Knollys complained that "their heying and frisking" at nights disturbed the slumbers of all quartered near them—an inconvenience which he once strove to remedy by invading their dormitory and marching up and down declaiming Latin verses in his nightshirt and spectacles.

Lady Bridget seems to have inherited much of her family's tact and shrewdness in escaping the pitfalls of a Court, for she was soon, as Mrs. Harding reported, on the best possible terms with the queen and with the other ladies also. Mary Harding was under no illusions as to the nature of her gilded servitude. "The place will be greatly chargeable to her, and something more painfuller than any would judge. And so will it be to me also, for that the late watchings and sittings up are tedious; yet, God be thanked, she liketh very well, and is very healthful." The delicate girl, who had probably grown very fast during her illness, had contracted a habit of stooping, greatly to her mother's concern. Mary Harding was able to certify that it was now "very

little or none at all," and at Lady Rutland's request promised to "be ready to put her in mind to forbear the same." There is something pathetic in the last sentence of Mrs. Harding's letter which tells the Countess Elizabeth that her daughter "is well liked of all, and endeavoureth herself to be thankful, and to follow the courtly order in all points."

It was well if Lady Rutland could take any comfort in her daughter's favourable reception at Court, for she must have been sorely pinched to supply Lady Bridget's outfit. She wrote to Lady Bedford that she would send £200 to provide all necessaries. The relative value of money in those days and in these is an intricate question, but according to one reckoning the £200 must have been equivalent to more than £1,000 of our money. Nor was this the only expense forced upon the unlucky countess, who out of her slender means was obliged to pay no less than £174 8*s.* 6*d.* in New Year's gifts to various personages at Court. Mrs. Ratcliff had £15; Lady Talbot, £13 6*s.* 8*d.* The name of Lady Dorothy Stafford, whom Mrs. Harding declared to have been "more like a mother than a stranger" to Lady Bridget, does not appear. All this is sufficiently curious; but some of the other items take away the breath of a modern reader:

"For the Queen, in gold £10
For the Lord Chancellor £20
For the Lord Treasurer £30
For the two Chief Justices ... ... £20."

The utmost that can be said is that these gifts were a tribute regularly exacted and openly delivered, not a bribe pouched by stealth. Earl Edward had been in the habit of offering £20 as a New Year's gift from himself and his wife to the queen, and a gold cup of the value of £20 to the Lord Treasurer, who "very gratefully" accepted it; Earl John had perforce followed this example in the one year of his tenure of the estate.

After this Lady Rutland seems to have enjoyed an interval of comparative peace. Her son paid occasional visits to Belvoir during the hunting-season, with Lord Burghley's approval. He alludes to a "long illness" and to an injury to his arm which gave his friends some anxiety; but his deportment seems to have been the chief object of their care. Old Roger Manners, always prodigal of advice which cost him nothing, wrote letters worthy of Polonius himself to the countess on this matter. "They say it is a thankless office to tell youth of their faults, yet it is the office of their best friends. If therefore your Ladyship will admonish my Lord of Rutland and those about him to have care of his manners, that his behaviour be civil, and to fashion his speech and entertainment according to the person and his calling, it were a wonderful comfort to his friends, and [would] win his Lordship great good opinion of the world. I have already said enough therein." Notwithstanding this declaration, Mr. Manners returned to the subject three weeks

later, and the countess evidently passed on his admonitions to the delinquent, who meekly rejoined: "I give your Ladyship humble thanks for your honourable direction in your letters for my good. I do assure your Ladyship that the carriage of myself both towards God and my book, my comeliness in diet and gesture, shall be such as your Ladyship shall hear and like well of."

Nearly three years had passed since Lady Bridget was sworn of her majesty's privy chamber, and she still retained the queen's favour. Mary Harding, who kept to her resolution of not leaving her mistress, reported that she was always required to carve for the queen, and was "no way at commandment but by Her Majesty." For all this, Mrs. Harding was ill-content; it was time for Lady Bridget to be married, and an opportunity seemed ready to hand. "My Lord of Northumberland" had been paying his addresses to "my Lady Vere," who would have none of him. Mrs. Harding was of opinion that he might be secured for Lady Bridget with proper assistance, "for your honour doth know that such great matters must have means." The young lady's uncle was then in London, and would have been a natural person to be consulted, but Mrs. Harding added a postscript to her letter to say, "I durst not make Mr. Roger Manners acquainted in these matters, because I think him so slow." It affords us an insight into the troubles of ladies of that day to learn from Mrs. Harding's

next letter that she herself could not write, and was obliged to dictate her advice on these private matters to some third person—a circumstance which caused delay when she was unable to find a discreet secretary.

The Earl of Northumberland was unsuccessful in his wooings. Lady Bridget declined to think of him as a husband, and Mrs. Harding was forced to comfort herself with the knowledge that "my lady doth continue in Her Majesty's good liking still, and all the rest, thanks be to God, and doth keep her health very well, and never looked better in all her life, thanks be to God." Mr. Roger Manners, who had lately visited her, had been profuse of civil speeches to his niece, and before going down into the country asked her whether she were in want of anything; "but he bestowed not the worth of a pair of gloves on her never since her first coming to the Court, but [only] a chain," writes the indignant Mrs. Harding, who perhaps had expected some small gift for herself.

In the November of the same year (1592) Sir Thomas Heneage wrote by the queen's command to Lady Rutland, to praise "the exceeding good modest and honourable behaviour and carriage of my Lady Bridget, your daughter, with her careful and diligent attendance of Her Majesty, so contenting to Her Highness, and so commendable in this place where she lives, where vices will hardly receive vizards and virtues will most shine. You may take

comfort of so virtuous a daughter, of whose being here and attendance Her Majesty hath bidden me to tell your Ladyship that you shall have no cause to repent. Besides I must show your Ladyship that as other of their abundance, so you of your want have sent her such tokens as are worth both best acceptation and thanks. The rest, touching the token of Her Majesty's remembrance, which—considering from whence it comes—deserves never to be forgotten, I refer to the delivery of this bearer." One wishes that Sir Thomas had specified the nature of this "token." It was probably of small value; Elizabeth, as she told Mary of Scotland, having long since reached the age at which persons give with the little finger and take with both hands; but the countess protested dutifully that while she lived she would esteem it above all other possessions, and that at her death she would bequeath it to her best-beloved child for a remembrance of her majesty's grace and favour.

If a few gracious words from the queen were of any comfort to Lady Rutland it was well, for her health declined and her anxieties did not lessen with the passage of years. Her enemies continued their exactions and annoyances, the worst being the Countess Isabel, whose last claim was for two hundred loads of brushwood and timber for eight hundred piles, "for work about Newark Mills." In vain did Mr. John Manners protest that there was no brushwood in Sherwood Forest. Lord Burghley

wrote curtly to order that as much should be supplied as the workmen required. Another illness prostrated the countess, and cut her off for the time from intercourse with her friends. Under the circumstances she may well have been anxious to see her daughter's future as sure as it could be made; and she or her advisers now evolved a scheme which was frequently put into execution in the sixteenth, century. From the executors of a certain Mr. Tyrwhitt she bought the wardship and marriage of his son, to whom she proposed to give Lady Bridget for a wife. The executors, Mr. Roger Manners and Lord Rutland, all approved of this arrangement, and of course the feelings of the bridegroom—to which no allusion is anywhere made—were of no importance.

It remained to secure the person of the bride, and this proved to be the most difficult part of the business. The queen's aversion to matrimony had not decreased since the days when one of Earl Edward's friends—a maid-of-honour—sued for leave to marry, and Elizabeth "dealt liberal both with blows and evil words." Sir John Harington, the queen's godson, tells us:

"She did often ask the ladies around her chamber 'if they loved to think of marriage'; and the wise ones did conceal well their liking thereto, knowing the Queen's judgment in this matter. Sir Matthew Arundel's fair cousin, not knowing so deeply as her fellows, was asked one day hereof, and simply said 'She had thought much about marriage if her father

did consent to the man she loved.' 'You seem honest, i' faith,' said the Queen; 'I will sue for you to your father,' at which the damsel was well pleased; and when her father, Sir Robert Arundel, came to Court, the Queen questioned him about his daughter's marriage, and pressed him to give consent if the match were discreet. Sir Robert, much astonished, said he had never heard his daughter had liking to any man; but he would give free consent to what was most pleasing to Her Highness's will and advice.' 'Then I will do the rest,' saith the Queen. The lady was called in, and told by the Queen 'that her father had given his free consent.' Then,' replied the simple girl, 'I shall be happy, an please Your Grace.' 'So thou shalt; but not to be a fool and marry,' said the Queen. 'I have his consent given to me, and I vow thou shalt never get it in thy possession. So, go to thy business; I see thou art a bold one, to own thy foolishness so readily.'"

In the latter years of Elizabeth's reign her courtiers, well knowing that it was hopeless to obtain her sanction, married by stealth, and were generally given lodgings in the Tower, wherein to repent themselves, as soon as she discovered the truth.

Mr. Roger Manners, for whose "aid and advice" the countess appealed at this juncture, was as useful as the majority of his sex are wont to be in an emergency. He "prayed God that the success of their schemes might be to their comfort"; but in

spite of having conferred with some of his friends of most discretion, he could devise no way of escape for Lady Bridget, and could give no practical assistance, his health obliging him to keep "his time appointed to go to Buckstones [? Buxton]." He could only suggest that Lady Rutland should lay the whole matter before the Lord Treasurer, and "require his furtherance to obtain leave of Her Majesty for my lady your daughter's coming unto your honour."

Instead of following this prudent advice, Lady Rutland now turned to Mary Harding, who had much to say on the subject. A likely suitor had just presented himself in the shape of Lord Wharton, of whom Lady Bridget seemed to approve. It was true that he was a widower with a family of children; but Mrs. Harding considered this a trifling matter. Lady Bridget's kindly nature would make her love her husband's children as her own; while, "if it pleased God to bless herself with any, she would not doubt but that He that sent them, would provide for them,"—a comfortable belief which seems still to influence those about to marry. Any marriage, however, would be welcome if it released the queen's favourite lady-in-waiting from her post. "If your Ladyship did know how weary my lady were of the Court, and what little gain there is gotten in this time, your honour would willingly be contented with a meaner fortune to help her from hence." As to the means of escape, Mrs. Harding was ready

with a suggestion: "I think the nearest way were to feign the measles, so she might have leave for a month to see your Ladyship, to air her. And when she were once with your honour, you might sue to get the Queen's favour. It would be easily granted when she were so far from her."

The queen's horror of infection was notorious, and was frequently used to their advantage by her servants. Any one suffering from the measles was not likely to be allowed near her person.

There is a copy of a letter from the Countess Elizabeth to Mrs. Mary Ratcliff, beseeching that in the critical condition of her health she might be allowed a visit from her daughter, whom she had not seen for five years. This letter is dated July 18th, 1594. Whether Lady Bridget was actually reduced to the schoolboy expedient of beating herself with a hairbrush does not appear, but in August she was at Belvoir and safely married to Mr. Tyrwhitt.

True to her habit of disclaiming or avoiding responsibility, Lady Rutland now wrote elaborate letters of explanation to "the Lord Chamberlain," "Mr. Vice-Chamberlain," and others, to protest her ignorance of the whole matter. This was so mean-spirited on the part of one who had approved, if not contrived, the whole plan that one is glad to find that the queen utterly refused to believe her. Neither her letters of abject apology nor the representations of the Lord Chamberlain and Mr. Vice-Chamberlain would convince her majesty

"that a matter of such weight could be done without your Ladyship's acquaintance, nor that my Lady Bridget would have adventured so great a breach of duty as to have done this, her last and greatest act, without your honour's acquaintance and consent first had thereto." Thus wrote Mr. Thomas Screven, who was charged with the duty of letting the countess know the queen's mind. Mr. Tyrwhitt was forthwith condemned to imprisonment and his wife to the custody of some lady. These were the usual sequels of a clandestine marriage, and could have occasioned no surprise. But "what more may follow, God knoweth," declared Mr. Screven, the acrid tone of whose letter suggests that he had not been taken into his lady's confidence, and resented it accordingly; "for Her Majesty is highly offended, and principally against your Ladyship, without whom, she assureth herself, this would never have been done, and letteth not to say that your Ladyship was bold to do it, believing that neither your honour nor my Lord, your son, did, or should ever need Her Majesty. What scope this will give to your Ladyship's adversaries to work on, I humbly leave to your honourable consideration."

Lady Rutland carried her policy of *laissez-faire* so far as to return no answer to the queen's letter and to take no steps for "sending up" her daughter, thereby drawing upon herself a stern reproof from Lord Hunsdon, and an order to deliver Lady Bridget to the custody of Lady Bedford. To add insult to

injury, Mr. Screven now wrote to remind Countess Elizabeth "of the present you are wont to give to the Queen on the day of her reigning, as it is high time to provide it if you mean it to be done."

If my Lady of Bedford were the same lady in whose household Lady Bridget was received before going to Court, the poor girl's punishment must have been severe. It would scarcely be in human nature for Lady Bedford to refrain from improving the occasion or from holding up Lady Bridget as an awful warning to the young ladies who were finishing their education in her establishment. To add to all other vexations, Mr. Tyrwhitt fell ill.

But Lady Bridget was resolute not to betray her mother, and stoutly continued to maintain that she herself was alone responsible for all that had occurred. However she might resent an injury, Elizabeth always respected high spirit in man or woman, and although she still declined to believe in Lady Rutland's innocence, she did not deal hardly with Lady Bridget after the first burst of her indignation had subsided. Mr. Roger Manners was stirred to unwonted activity by the distress of his niece, and even came to town to sue to the Lord Chamberlain, who promised his intercession. Mr. Tyrwhitt's illness was a good excuse for clemency in his case, and after releasing him, her majesty "graciously considered of Lady Bridget," and set her at liberty. Lord Hunsdon wrote to Lady Rutland on November 27th to inform her that the queen

"doth not impute the fault so much to the young couple as to your Ladyship," and therefore pardoned them. "But now," continues Lord Hunsdon, who evidently did not study the art of making his letters agreeable to the recipient, "there rests but for your Ladyship to send for your daughter as you sent her to my Lady Bedford's by her [the queen's] commandment, who is now here in this town ready to deliver her, whensoever your Ladyship sends for her, and the sooner the better, for my Lady of Bedford hath been long burdened with her." Seeing that poor Lady Bridget cannot have had the least desire to trespass on Lady Bedford's hospitality, the last sentence is needlessly ungracious.

The Earl of Rutland's case was at this time under her majesty's consideration, as well as that of his sister. He was desirous to see foreign countries, but it was first necessary to obtain the queen's leave, which was granted on condition that "some discreet honest man" should accompany him. Lord Burghley, who conversed with the earl before his departure, found him "quite ignorant of his estate," and wrote to bid Lady Rutland to "acquaint him fully therewith"; and, "as my own knowledge thereof is not much better, also to let me understand the same."

Whether from the jealousy of authority often exhibited by temporary regents, or from that natural incapacity which she bewailed to the commissioners, Lady Rutland could give no account of her stewardship. Writing to his brother John at Christmas, 1594,

old Roger Manners complained of the mystery wherewith she chose to veil the earl's affairs. "I perceive by my Lord of Rutland's letter that the Countess dealeth strangely, and for all her promises will come to no account nor make him, nor any of his friends any way acquainted with her dealings. I pray God this breed no falling out in the end." Mr. Manners had evidently bestowed some good advice upon his niece which had been ill-received (perhaps her recent marriage had made her feel independent of the uncle who had been liberal with little except reproof), since he goes on to say: "For the fault I find with Lady Bridget she hath often been told of it, but all is in vain."

Whether by meek submission to the rod and seasonable offerings Lady Rutland would have made her peace with the authorities can never be decided. The strain and anxiety of the last few months had been too much for her feeble constitution. The exact date of her death does not appear, nor whether her son returned from his travels in time to close her eyes; but on April 9th, 1595, Roger Manners wrote to condole with the earl that the estate was found to be no better, suggesting that if he were to examine my lady's letters and papers he might find some clue as to what had become of the rest. While protesting his love for his nephew, Mr. Manners could not find time to come to his help, having important business in London, and he opined that Mr. John Manners was more experienced and more

capable of giving good advice, "if you earnestly require him to do so."

A careful study of his letters does not lead to the conclusion that Mr. Roger Manners lacked the power to counsel the rising generation if he chose; but in justice to him it must be owned that he was then fully occupied by a terrible scandal in the Talbot family. Edward Talbot (a younger son of Queen Mary's gaoler) was accused by "my lady's alkmist, Wodd," of instigating him to poison Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury; and Roger Manners, whose sister had been mother to both Gilbert and Edward, was maintaining Edward's innocence.

The earl submitted an estimate for the funeral expenses of his mother, and the queen and Lord Burghley pronounced that "considering his estate, he should not exceed the note he had set down, but rather lessen it." After a life of incessant vexations, Countess Elizabeth was grudged even a burial suitable to her rank when she had at last succeeded fn laying down her responsibilities and escaping from a most troublesome world.

Her sons inherited her propensity for doing the wrong thing. Lord Rutland and two of his brothers were involved in the harebrained revolt of the Earl of Essex, and were lucky in escaping with imprisonment and fines. None the wiser for this experience, the second of the three, on succeeding his brother in the title, must needs be reconciled to the Church of Rome—under a sovereign who believed

himself to have been the destined victim of the Gunpowder Plot.

Perhaps the most fortunate of this very maladroit family was Lady Bridget, who disappears almost entirely from sight as soon as she is released from Lady Bedford's duress. About a year after her mother's death, Mr. John Manners, who was not easily pleased with the rising generation, wrote to her brother, the earl, that Mr. Tyrwhitt was a good husband and Lady Bridget a passing good wife.

Five years later Dr. Jegon, the earl's old tutor, entertained Lady Bridget and her "goodly boy" at Cambridge. Her comfort was then somewhat disturbed by the extravagance of her husband, who declined to give any assurance of her jointure, or to allow her more than £200 a year for herself, having originally promised her £400. "Wherewith, notwithstanding, she is well contented," concludes Doctor Jegon, whose heart had warmed to the fair young matron, "and they live very well, and agree together most lovingly."

Very soon after this visit, Lady Bridget's married life came to an end. The calendar of manuscripts at Belvoir contains a paper dated July 10th, 1604, with the copy of an inscription to the memory of Lady Bridget, wife of Robert Tyrwhitt, and daughter of John, Earl of Rutland, who died leaving three sons and one daughter.

II.

A FAITHFUL WIFE.

BRILLIANA CONWAY (LADY HARLEY)

(*b.* 1600; *d.* 1643).

II.

A FAITHFUL WIFE.

CONSTITUTIONAL principles, Protestantism, and even common sense may lead us to rejoice that the cause of the Stuarts died with the Young Chevalier, and is not likely to be revived even by the harmless enthusiasts who toast their liege lady, Mary of Este, and hang garlands about the statue of King Charles the Martyr or the tomb of Mary, Queen of Scots. Yet the greater number of us must confess that if our heads are Whig, our hearts are Jacobite. Some allowance must be made for the fascination which a lost cause always possesses for imaginative spirits, and still more allowance for the spirit of opposition which is so important a factor in the education of young people. The histories supplied in nurseries and schoolrooms are of strictly constitutional tendencies—a fact which in itself is enough to make nine out of ten children as devoted to the much abused Stuarts as any household of young "malignants" in the seventeenth century. But after making all deductions on these scores, it must be owned that all the glamour, all the romance,

all the charm, of those days has gathered about the memory of those who fought for their rightful king. With the exception of a few very cultured or very unimaginative people, we all feel that the Royalists are those with whom we are most in sympathy. We have forsaken the exquisite inconsistency with which former generations thanked God, on May 29th, for restoring Charles II., and on November 5th for assisting a Dutchman to dethrone his brother; but, reason as we may, the withered leaves of the white rose still smell more sweetly than the flaccid petals of the orange lily; and it is better to listen to the low, clear whistle of the blackbird than to the strident crash and blare of the German bands that acclaim the arrival of the House of Hanover.

Poet, musician, artist, story-teller, all have combined to invest with a picturesque halo the figures of those who fought on one side in the great rebellion and in the subsequent struggles, and they are living, breathing human beings, while most of their opponents are empty names. It is unjust to some of the actors that it should be so, but the fact remains that even the insignificant Royalists are more familiar to us than the eminent Puritans. Few of us, for example, could give a clear description of Pym's character and person; half a dozen lines in a catalogue and a picture by Van Dyke have made the Young Cavalier, who died ringed about by his foes, with his back to a tree, an actual personality,

though he was of little real importance in his day. If this is the case with the men, how much more is it true of the women? Among Puritan ladies we may have some recollection of the exemplary but tedious Mrs. Hutchinson, and the false Lady Carlisle, who betrayed both sides alternately, and profited nothing by her treason; but Lady Fanshawe and Lady Morton are more familiar. We have all admired the constancy of Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby; but a Puritan heroine as brave and as sorely tried as the daughter of the Huguenots is unknown to many whose pulses have often thrilled at the story of the defence of Lathom House.

On the borders of Herefordshire lies the little village of Brampton Bryan, founded, so says tradition, by the Norman de Bryan. Only fragments remain of the old castle, which was destroyed by the Royalist forces under Sir Michael Woodhouse in 1644. In the previous year it had held out bravely against the enemy, but in the interval it had lost the brave mistress who was the life and soul of the defence—Brilliana, the wife of Sir Robert Harley, Master of the Mint and Knight of the Bath. She is generally known as "the Lady Brilliana"; but as her father, Edward Conway, never attained a higher rank than that of viscount, she had no right to the courtesy title; in our day she would have been the Honourable Lady Harley.

At the time of her birth, in 1600, her father was Governor of Brill, or "the Brill," as it was then

called, and to this circumstance she owed her extraordinary name, which, unfortunately for the girls of the Harley family, was handed down through succeeding generations. Presumably the Conways returned to England in 1606, as an Act was passed in that year "for the naturalisation of the children of Sir Edward Conway, Knight." Her education was unusually good at a time when an educated woman was the exception and not the rule. The standard set in the days of Queen Elizabeth had declined, but Brilliana could have borne to have been judged by it. She could read French more easily than her own tongue, and also knew Latin; she had thoroughly studied ancient and modern history, as well as divinity. She was a notable housewife, famed for her manufacture of pies, biscuits, cakes, and other delicacies, and prided herself on her skill in compounding medicines. With all these accomplishments she was quite unable to spell, as her correspondence shows. Some of the words in most familiar use became unintelligible conglomerations of letters under her pen. But many of her contemporaries of her own sex did no better; and, happily for her, she did not live in our age of board-schools and cheap culture, when arbitrary spelling is wrongly considered a mark of illiteracy.

The Conways seem to have been a happy and affectionate family, even when Sir Edward introduced a stepmother into their home. Brilliana had three brothers and at least two sisters, one of

whom bore an even more uncouth name than her own, that of "Heiligenwith"—probably another relic of their stay in the Low Countries. Owing, perhaps, to the loss of her mother, her favourite relation appears to have been her mother's sister Mary, wife of Sir Horace Vere (afterwards Lord Vere of Tilbury). Many years after her marriage she wrote to her daughter that there was not a wiser or better woman than my Lady Vere.

There must always have been a certain vein of austerity in Brilliana underlying all her sweetness and gentleness, and perhaps it was this that attracted her to the rigid Puritan, Sir Robert Harley. At first sight the match seems disproportionate. To our latitudinarian eyes he appears bigoted and intolerant; he was more than twenty years her senior, and he had already been married twice. A letter from him to a lady whom he had courted, but declined to marry, owing to disputes about the settlements, does not give a very favourable impression of his character. "Though your father's dealings with me hath been much under expectation, and more disproportionable to worthy proceeding in a matter of so dear importance, yet shall it not privilege me to detain from you what is your due. . . . I must acquaint you that your father's more than unkind usage hath been the strong motive of this fatal breach; wherewith how far you have been of familiarity I know not, but it shall be great satisfaction to me that I let you know it was his fault."

However, as these negotiations miscarried early in Sir Robert's life, it is possible that he may have improved in his maturer years, and Sir Edward Conway's letter to him on the occasion of his marriage to Brilliana could only have been written by one who thoroughly approved of the union:

"My good son—for so methinks it is your good pleasure that the style run, and methinks it is as rich an embroidery to me as it can be silk lace to you; although I have told you true of myself, and could find in my heart to allay my daughter to raise your value, yet since she hath a long race to run with you, and that you have advantages enough over her already, I will not give you this that you may misprize her out of her father's mouth, and therefore I will only say that the bargain was equally made, and I pray God much good may it do to you. But if it would please you to be as good a son as she will be a wife, and as good a husband as I will be a faithful friend, I shall take it for a great favour of fortune that I may have the honour to style myself your loving father."

Brilliana's marriage took place on July 22nd, 1622, and she then went to live at Brampton Bryan. The Harleys were allied by marriage with all the leading families in Herefordshire and the neighbourhood, so that she was surrounded by connections, and—a circumstance which she must have valued more highly—the rector of Brampton Bryan. Mr.

Thomas Pierson was a man of rare sanctity and of considerable toleration, in spite of his Puritan strictness; he instituted the rigid observance of Ember weeks and fast-days, "the resort to which of many godly persons from remote places was as the flight of doves to the windows of holy light." A more practical good work was the effecting of a reconciliation between old Mr. Thomas Harley and his son Sir Robert, who for some time had been on uncomfortable terms. So far from meeting the usual fate of peacemakers, Mr. Pierson (against whom Mr. Harley had formerly lodged frequent complaints with the Bishop of Hereford) succeeded in winning the old man's friendship and confidence, and ministered to him continually in his latter days.

The early years of Lady Harley's married life were fairly peaceable, and were marked chiefly by the constant additions to her family. The eldest—a boy christened Edward after his grandfather, who delighted in him—was born rather more than a year after her marriage, and was followed by Robert, Thomas, Brilliana, Dorothy, and Elizabeth. All of these lived to grow up—a circumstance uncommon in their day, when the mortality among young children was terrible. Did one survive the treatment to which itself and its mother were subjected at the time of its birth, the rigorous course of bleeding, blistering, and dosing which it was afterwards compelled to undergo, killed all but the very strongest.

Sir Robert's second wife had borne him nine children, not one of whom lived beyond infancy.

Lady Harley's own health was wretched. Nothing but her undaunted spirit could have enabled her to live as long as she did, with the cares of a young and very delicate family on her shoulders and the management of the whole estate left to her during her husband's frequent absences. When his duties as Knight of the Shire or as Master of the Mint did not keep him in London, the business of the county, of which he was an active and a diligent promoter, generally called him to Hereford or elsewhere. Lady Harley passed many lonely hours in her castle, which she beguiled by writing long and affectionate letters to her absentee husband. Whether he were at all worthy of the love that she bestowed upon him does not seem clear; that he often left her to pass through her confinements alone may have been the result of accident, or of an honest conviction that his duty to his country must override his duty to his wife. But when the hour of sorest need came for Brampton Castle and its lady, Sir Robert was absent from his home; and either his religious principles or a naturally reserved disposition kept him from responding to his wife's beseechings for a little tenderness. "Alas! my dear sir, I know you do not, to the one half of my desires, desire to see me that loves you more than any earthly thing," she wrote once to him, when he was in London and she was nursing her

old father-in-law and her four oldest children with "great colds" at Brampton.

Most of her charm was probably inherited from her father, although she was so unfortunate as to lack the keen sense of humour so marked a feature in his letters and those of his eldest son, which would have helped her to bear her many trials. Soon after marriage Sir Edward Conway was raised to the peerage as Baron Conway of Ragley, and wrote a bantering letter to his daughters Heiligenwith and Mary to say, "If there be traffic between Brocklesby,* Brampton and you, then tell those ladies that I have found out that the best thing in being a baron is that the strife is taken away from them for place, since the eldest daughter of a Baron goes before a Knight's wife of the Bath." He kept up an affectionate correspondence with his "children," Sir Robert and Lady Harley, and never forgot to send messages to his grandchildren, "our son, Secretary Edward, and my acquaintance, Robin, and my unknown Thomas, and my dear Brill."

Lord Conway's death in the winter of 1630—1631 must have been a sore grief to his daughter, who was taken very ill, whether in consequence of the shock or for other reasons does not appear. The new Lord Conway wrote a kind and friendly letter to Sir Robert, lamenting that the execution of his father's will is likely to give rise to a dispute with

* Brocklesby was the home of Lady Harley's elder sister, Frances, wife of Sir W. Pelham.

his widow—"which I would be as loath to fall upon as a rock at sea. I would be content with some loss rather than not part with her with a good grace,"—a little touch which gives a pleasant idea of the sweet, obliging temper of the Conways.

* * *

The first great break in Lady Harley's life after the loss of her father must have been the parting with his namesake, her eldest son, who was sent to Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in the autumn of 1638, under the care of his excellent tutor, Mr. Perkins. Between Lady Harley and Edward there seems to have existed that tender sympathy and devotion which is sometimes to be found between mothers and sons, but not between any other relatives. It is the saying of one who was a mother herself that the tie which binds a woman to her eldest son is closer than that which binds her to any of her other children, and it often seems as if this were the case. It is certain that Edward was more to Lady Harley than all her other children, loving mother though she was; perhaps, finding her husband not so responsive as she could have wished, she consoled herself for his coldness by lavishing affection on her boy. Edward's delicate health, inherited from herself, may have been the excuse made to her sensitive conscience for the passionate tenderness with which she regarded him. His after life shows that he was worthy of such a mother.

Her letters to him, many of which are in existence, are such as any devoted mother might write at any period, making allowances for style and phraseology. Her repeated exhortations to him to be careful of his religious progress would scarcely be relished by the modern schoolboy, who would appreciate still less the medicines for the good of the body which often accompanied her advice for the good of the soul. Lady Harley piqued herself not a little upon her knowledge of physic (poor soul! she had abundant opportunities to prove it, upon her children as well as herself), although her compounds were not always favourably regarded by regular practitioners. Mr. Richard Owen, of Oriel College, Oxford, wrote a complimentary Latin letter to Edward Harley upon his coming up to the University, and added at the conclusion, "Remember me to your lady mother, whose medicines however my London doctor has forbidden me to take." Nothing discouraged by this, Lady Harley continued to prescribe for her family, and that they survived the treatment at all is the sign of their marvellous vitality. Whether it were "beer boiled with liquorice" or with "scurvy-grass" for internal ailments, water for sore eyes, bezoar-stone for the ague, "orampotabely" (*aurum potabile*) for general debility, or myrrh to hold in the mouth as a preventive against the plague, she was ready to supply it for Edward's benefit. Her own description of the doses poured down the reluctant throats of her

younger boys, both of whom were subject to "fits"—apparently of ague—awakes sympathy and horror in those accustomed to a milder *régime*. "Your brother Robert," she once informs Edward, "was very ill, and I prevailed with him to take a vomit, which, he says now, if he had not taken he thinks he had been in his grave; but he was very unwilling to take any more physic, so he did not; and I fear he is a little scorbutical; for his teeth are loose. He is altogether against physic; he thinks an ague must be worn away by going abroad; but these are not such agues." She herself was ready at all times to submit to the dosing, bleeding, blistering, and other varieties of torture ordained by the doctors, and even went so far at times as to declare herself better for it. With all her love of prescribing for others, she did not approve of those who pretended to understand their own diseases. "Here enclosed I have sent you two letters," she warns her son, "by which you may know Mr. Hibbons took a vomit contrary to all counsel, and thereupon—died."

But if she were anxious to dose her son, she was still more anxious to feed him. Soon after his arrival at college she sent him a cake to eat in memory of home, and few messengers passed between Brampton Bryan and Oxford without bearing some dainty to "my dear son, Mr. Edward Harley." The hampers that now ruin the digestion and the morals of the public schoolboy are trifles to those which this Puritan youth received from

his mother. At first she was doubtful whether she might send him a cold pie, as his father had said that he would not care for it, and Mrs. Pierson's son, when at Oxford, had declined any such gifts from his family. To her great joy, Edward was graciously pleased to accept it, and nearly every variety of pie was henceforth sent to him—sometimes as many as seven coming at a time. Kid pies, turkey pies, venison, veal, and bacon were given into the charge of the Oxford carrier, besides lighter refreshments, such as violet cakes, biscuits, and apples. Sometimes Edward's sister "Brill" would add a box of wafers or some quince cakes. The tutor, Mr. Perkins, was not neglected, but received boxes of sweetmeats, dried plums, and other tokens of good will and remembrance.

There is an indescribable charm about the letters which Lady Harley penned, often from a sick-bed, to the child of her heart. In spite of the severity of the religious teaching in which she and her family had been bred, in spite of the restraint and formality then thought proper between young people and their elders, the woman and mother in her cannot be repressed, and is continually breaking through artificial bonds. The originals of these letters are said to be untidy and ill-written, and the spelling is inconceivably obscure. She could not even master such an ordinary word as "write," which in her hands is always transformed to "rwite." Yet, for all this, after toiling through many closely printed

pages that at first sight bear little resemblance to English, it is impossible not to love and reverence the writer.

"I may well say you are my well-beloved child; therefore I can but tell you I miss you."—"My dear Ned, nothing here below on the earth is more dear to me than your being well. It is that I pray for, and rejoice when I am assured of it. . . . My dear Ned, write to me as soon as you can; for I long to hear from you, and the Lord in mercy let me hear well from you."—"I may well say that my life is bound with yours, and I hope I shall never have cause to recall and repent of my love, with which I love you."—"My prayers are for your health, and I hope the Lord will be merciful to me in you, and as I may so say, to spare my Joseph to me." She gave him a ring, which he wore until it was broken, and then he kept the fragments. Hearing of this, she sent him another, with these words, which might have been written by a mistress to her lover: "Since you kept the brittle ring till it brake, I have sent you one of a more [en]during substance, and that you may know I have worn it, I have left the ribbon upon it, which did help to make it fit for my finger; and keep this till I give you a better." It is evident that her continued illnesses had wasted her until the rings would not stay on her fingers.

It is difficult to gather intelligence from Lady Harley's letters, as she flies from one topic to another, mingling her anxieties for the welfare of

Ned's soul with inquiries whether he has "something over his bed's head," and solicitude for the distracted state of the kingdom, with fears that he will ruin his health by confining his diet to fish during Lent. Her own infirmities prevented her from keeping the public and private fasts as she would have wished. The register of Brampton Bryan still contains a memorandum that Dame Brilliana Harley was licensed by Thomas Pierson, rector, to eat flesh on fast-days in reason of her great weakness, "until it shall please God to render her." The number of these fasts, which were then observed by all classes, may seem strange to us, to whom fasting has become a badge of a religious party instead of a general custom; but it must be remembered that salted meats then formed the staple provision of the household during all the winter months, and that it was absolutely necessary for health that this should be relieved by an enforced diet of eggs, fish, vegetables, and such light fare in the early spring. Like many other rules of the ancient Church, abstinence from flesh-meat was enjoined as much in the interest of the body as of the soul.

Every trivial misfortune or vexation was regarded by Lady Harley as coming directly from a Higher Power. When a long illness confined her to her bed she wrote to Edward: "I take it as a special providence of God, that I have so froward a maid about me as Mary is, since I love peace and quietness so well; she has been extremely froward since I

have been ill; I did not think that any would have been so choleric." She was not so desirous of special providences for her darling, as the next sentence shows: "I pray God, if ever you have a wife, she may be of a meek and quiet spirit." If the tone of this letter is too suggestive of Dean Hole's old woman, who rejoiced in the slanders of her next-door neighbour as "another lift towards Heaven," there is real beauty in the passages in which Lady Harley reminds her son that through bodily weakness and mental anxiety her absolute trust and hope in the goodness of God had sustained her. "Nay, this is our comfort, that the time of trouble is a special time, in which the Lord has commanded His children to seek unto Him; and the Lord does not bid us to seek Him in vain." That these were not empty words was proved by her perfect calmness in the face of the trial from which she had earnestly prayed to be delivered, when children, home, and goods were in dire peril, and husband and son were far away.

In spite of her saintliness, occasionally there is a refreshing savour of humanity about her. "Mr. Scidamore [? Scudamore] that dwells hard by Hereford, who married my Lord Scidamore's sister, told your father the other day at Hereford, that he would see you at Oxford," she wrote to Edward. "He has been abroad in France and Italy; if he do come to you, be careful to use him with all respect. But in the entertainment of any such, be not put out of yourself; speak freely, and always remember

that they are but men; and for being gentlemen it puts no difference between you; for you have part in nobleness of birth; though some have place before you, yet you may be in their company."

The son's letters to his mother are not to be found, and it is conjectured that they disappeared, with many other valuables, when Brampton Bryan Castle was destroyed. It is sometimes possible to gather the substance of what he wrote from Lady Harley's replies. We hear little of his studies, and still less of his amusements. The latter seem to have been of a curious nature. Most of us have laughed over the ancient statute which forbids the Oxford undergraduate to carry a bow and arrows or to play marbles on the steps of St. Mary's, and it is something of a shock to find this Puritan youth indulging in a pastime as childish as either of these. An indisposition which attacked him soon after his arrival at college was attributed by his mother to over-indulgence in swinging. He had his moments of worldliness, as is proved by the story of his new clothes. In his first term he required another suit of clothes, and seems to have wished to ruffle it a little, like some of the young gallants who swaggered about the streets in laced cloaks and jewelled bands. But his father sent orders that the new suit was to be of the plainest, and poor Lady Harley was nearly torn in pieces between her habitual submission to her husband and her natural wish to give her darling all that he wanted. She dared not

even express her sympathy openly, and was forced to bestow comfort in a letter sent by special messenger, unknown to Sir Robert Harley or to any of her household: "Dear Ned, it is very well done that you submit to your father's desire in your clothes; and that is a happy temper, both to be contented with plain clothes, and in the wearing of better clothes not to think oneself the better for them, nor to be troubled if you be in plain clothes and see others of your rank in better."

The letters between Edward and his sister "Brill" give a pleasant picture of family life, very like what is to be found in a contented household of the same class in these days, although the young lady bestows more attention on the state of his soul than would be tolerated by a modern brother. She sends him a box of wafers, and he takes much trouble to procure her a silver thimble. When she loses her hood, and dares not confess it to her mother, it is to Edward that she applies for another; and Lady Harley, seeing the new hood, divines whence it came, but says nothing to the culprit, and privately repays to Edward what he had spent on it. Once there is a trifling cloud between the brother and sister. Lady Harley had been ill, and Brill, thinking that "bad news would come fast enough," forbore to say anything of it in writing to her brother. Unluckily Edward heard of it from some other source, and wrote a violent rating to poor Brill, explaining her silence by the cruel surmise that

she was too busy at *patis* to attend to her mother. What *patis* may have been it is impossible to explain, as Mr. Richard Ward, who prints the letter, gives no interpretation of the word. A friend has suggested "parties," which may be near the truth. But whatever it was, the accusation cruelly wounded Brill. She reminds Edward of her mother's continual illnesses when he was at home, and asks him if he then ever saw her at *patis*. Three days later she writes to say that she hopes he has forgiven her. Edward still preserves an offended silence, and Brill, who was a true woman, instead of sulking in her turn, waited till Lady Harley had left her bed to write again, and then hoped that the good news of the patient's recovery would make amends for all that had passed. "The last letter you wrote me had not a spark of love in it; I would be very glad of a letter with a little more love in it," she pleads with a gentleness that, it is to be hoped, made Edward ashamed of his injustice, for her next letter is in a more cheerful strain, and alludes to two murders which had recently enlivened the neighbourhood.

She was a better correspondent than he was, and although she once jestingly complains that he would greatly prefer a good cold pie "if it were in competition betwixt my letters and your learned lips," she owns that she can never write too often to him, if it were every hour.

Sir Robert Harley was frequently away from home, and when he returned, although he brought presents

of lemons to his family, which were very welcome, he added nothing to the tranquillity round him. His iconoclastic tendencies would have done credit to a Greek emperor or a Dutch reformer, and did not make him popular with his neighbours. Brill writes to tell Edward that a certain Robert Mathey, of Buckton, in making some alterations in his stable, found "a most horrible picture of the great God of Heaven and Earth,"—one can almost see the scandalised dismay in the face of the good little maiden as she penned her "crippled lines." He kept it in safety for about a year, and then some officious busybody thought good to reveal its existence to Sir Robert. The Puritan knight immediately ordered it to be brought to him, and broke it in pieces; "and I flung the dust upon the water," adds Brill, who at that time was not ten years old. Some time later Sir Robert went to the Quarter Sessions at Hereford, and on his return journey passed through Leominster, and beheld in the churchyard "one crucifix, and another crucifix of stone over the church porch, and in the great window in the west end of the church two crucifixes painted, and other scandalous pictures of the persons of the Trinity, and in the great window in the east end of the church one other crucifix painted," all of which he immediately required the churchwardens to remove.

At the same time Mr. Henry Eccleston, steward of the king's household at Ludlow Castle, wrote to the Earl of Bridgewater, President of the Marches,

to complain of "Sir Robert Harlow's [sic] vehement course in pulling down the cross at Wigmore," which was beaten to dust with a sledge-hammer. Three days later, as Mr. Eccleston testifies, Sir Robert pulled down the cross at Leintwardine, and broke the windows in the church, "and beat the glass small with a hammer and threw it into Teme, in imitation of King Asa, 2 Chron. xv. 16, who threw the images into the brook Kedron; and because he could not come at Kedron he threw it into Teme, as Mr. Yeates, one of his chaplains, said." An attempt to work similar damage at Aymestry was successfully resisted by the parish, "and so he departed for that time." Aymestry still preserves its beautiful rood-screen of carved wood, thanks to the spirit of those who resisted Sir Robert's zeal. After reading all these instances of his bigotry and vandalism, it is difficult to regret the destruction of his castle.

Lady Harley rejoiced to hear that the communion table in Hereford Cathedral had been turned, and "copes and basins and all such things taken away"; but there was much sound common sense blended with her ardent desire for the "purging" of the Church. When her younger sons, after the manner of priggish boys, paraded extreme religious opinions, she wrote to her "dear Ned," "My fear is lest we should fall into the same error as Calvin did, who was so earnest in opposing the popish holy days that he intrenched upon the holy Sabbath; so I fear we shall be so earnest in beating down their

too much vilifying of the Common Prayer Book, that we shall say more for it than we ever intended."

* * *

It is tempting to linger over these middle years of Lady Harley's life. In spite of a large family, some members of which were always ailing, a husband who, to put it mildly, was far from being as considerate as he ought, and her own wretched health, there were some intervals of brightness. After Edward left college, one trouble followed fast on the heels of another—"not single spies, but in battalions"—until she could bear no more.

Oxford, always noted for its loyalty, can never have been a congenial residence for a Harley, and as the breach between king and parliament widened, it became impossible to remain neutral. At first "the sickness" (either the plague or the small-pox) was the pretext for Edward's remaining with his father at Westminster instead of returning to Magdalen Hall; but in the May of 1641 he wrote to Mr. Perkins to have his name taken off the college books. The tutor was then under a cloud, having been caught by the vice-chancellor and proctors, not making merry at a tavern, but holding a prayer-meeting—a far more heinous offence—with others of the same mind with himself.

Edward remained in London, and his mother was torn in two between her thankfulness that he

was with his father and her fears that he would fall a victim to "the sickness," which was then spreading throughout the city. "Dear Ned, I could wish your chamber were in Lincoln's Inn, and not in the lane over against it; those lanes were the unsweetest places in London, and always the sickness is in those places. I would have you tell your father what I think of your chamber and the house. I would have writ to him about it myself, but that I thought it might trouble him to read so long a letter."

Without reading the old news-letters or other records of those times, it is difficult to realise how terribly the country was scourged by the plague before the great outbreak in 1665. The Court was obliged to shift from place to place before it, and those who were perforce confined in London or other great cities died like flies. In the summer in which Queen Henrietta Maria arrived in England as a bride, nearly two thousand persons were dying weekly of the plague in London alone. The Michaelmas sessions of all the law courts were adjourned to Reading. The judge, who was obliged to give notice of the adjournment, drove up from the country in his coach, bringing provisions for the day with him, and dined with his suite under the trees at Hyde Park Corner. After dinner he drove to Westminster Hall as fast as his lumbering coach would bear him, through empty streets in which the rank grass was springing, adjourned the court, and fled from the pestilence-stricken city.

In spite of her fears, Lady Harley soon found herself obliged to part with another child. Her bad health and many cares prevented her from giving sufficient attention to Brill, and Lady Vere, the kind aunt who had been so much to her, was willing to take the girl into her household. It was too good an opportunity to be lost, and Lady Harley could but rejoice to bestow her daughter in such excellent keeping, although she wrote to Ned, "It is my grief that my condition in health is such that I can not be of more advantage to you all than I am." Ned, thoughtful of his mother, had sent her a welcome present of some "sparigous" (probably asparagus), but Sir Robert had merely vouchsafed a grumble because she had not remitted some money for which he had asked. She might have pleaded that she had been very ill with "a great fit of the stone," but her only rejoinder was, "I am sorry that your father was displeased for not having his money sooner; but I did what I could, and so will do still." It is a wonder that she kept her temper under her continual trials. Her younger sons were wasting their time in idleness at home, their tutor having declared himself too ill to continue his lessons, Sir Robert would return no answer to her inquiries as to his wishes for them, and her new cook proved "so naught" that she was forced to dismiss him.

In the summer of 1641 some atonement was made to her; Edward came home for a short while. "I cannot blame you to be unwilling to leave so dear

a father ; yet remember, you come to a mother that loves you," she urged, with sweet simplicity, when the question of his coming was raised. As far as can be decided from the dates of her letter, Edward reached Brampton in August, and did not return to London till the following January or February. In all probability their comfort during these happy months was not diminished by the fact that Sir Robert was forced to be in London for the most part of the time.

It was the last interval of peace—a hush before the bursting of the storm. Towards the end of November, 1641, the country was so disturbed and the fears of "a Papist rising" so general that Lady Harley, by her husband's directions, laid in a store of bullets, and caused the pieces of cannon at the castle to be charged. She had only two men under her roof, and feared that the castle would never stand a siege. Under the circumstances she entreated her husband that she might seek a refuge for herself and the children in Shrewsbury or some other neighbouring town. But Sir Robert pooh-poohed the fear of any difficulties with the "Papists," and Lady Harley submitted to his will. The children were "not very afraid," and it was her great joy that she had such a dear husband, who, she knew, would always take care of her children and herself. The pathetic submissiveness of her letter ought to have touched Sir Robert's heart, but he was too busy, with others of the House of

Commons, passing a vote "never to tolerate Popery" to pay much attention to so insignificant a matter as the safety of his family. It shows the difference between husband and wife that in the midst of her preparations for the defence of Brampton Bryan she could find time to make some quince cakes, which she packed carefully in a little box and sent him, "to put in his pocket."

Private griefs were added to public anxieties, for in January, 1642, the death of "my sister Wake" threw Lady Harley into mourning. She wrote to beg her husband to give her "a grogram gown," and was careful to explain to his masculine intellect that grogram was "a plain silk stuff." Her son's letters were her great comfort, and he was a frequent correspondent. As Sir Robert grew more and more absorbed in public business, never sending the instruction she needed in such matters as the education of the boys or the management of the estate, she turned more and more to Ned, entreating him to remind his father of this or of that, and to let her know what he said. The agent's dealings had long been unsatisfactory; but of course Sir Robert could not be troubled to choose another or to allow his wife to appoint one whom she liked and trusted. Sir Robert was instant in demanding pies to be made and sent to his London lodgings, but would not give his delicate wife a coach and horses so that she might be "able to take the air sometimes." The only consolation left to the exasperated reader

of her pitiful yet uncomplaining letters is the reflection that Sir Robert must have been extremely helpless and uncomfortable when she could no longer drudge for him.

Brill's departure from home had been delayed by one cause and another, and it was not until April, 1642, that she left the mother whom she was never to see again, bearing with her a letter and two shirts for Ned, who met her on the way. He was implored by his mother to remember that Brill was young ; "therefore, dear Ned, observe her carriage and let not your counsel be wanting to her, and I hope she will have so much wisdom to take it." Much of the good advice bestowed on Ned during his stay at college by his sister was probably now retorted upon her. Lady Harley was anxious to hear how Brill looked on her arrival. "She did look much paler, I think, by reason of her earnest desire to go up to London." The country was still disturbed, as Sir William Waller, who had been busy in the neighbourhood, had gone to Gloucester, leaving "poor Hereford" without any one to govern it ; but while still in a state of semi-siege, Lady Harley's chief longing was to hear whether Brill still looked pale. To add to her troubles, little Dorothy was very ill, and little Peggy seized this opportunity to put her knee out of joint, and had to be sent to Coventry, as there was no bone-setter to be found nearer to Brampton Bryan.

Once more Lady Harley renewed her entreaties

to her husband to be allowed to leave the castle for a time. The country was "very insolent," and became more unsafe every day. "There is nobody who loves you or me," she told him; and it is likely that she was right so far as Sir Robert was concerned. To her son she spoke more plainly. Sir Robert, instead of taking measures for her safety, had been complaining of the management of his property, and her vexation could not be altogether suppressed. "I wish myself with all my heart at London, and then your father might be a witness of what is spent," she writes; and then the old habit of patient self-control returns, and she hastens to add: "If your father think it best for me to be in the country, I am very well pleased with what he shall think best."

Sir Robert's next proceeding was to join with those who were raising troops of horse in different parts of the country "for the good of this poor kingdom," as Lady Harley gracefully phrased it, and to send his orders to Brampton Bryan for contributions in money and in kind. Ready money there was none; but Lady Harley's common sense decided that it would be better for the present to borrow on security than to sell their plate. "We do not know what straits we may be put to, and therefore I think it is better to borrow whilst one may and keep the plate for a time of need." Sir Robert, however, demanded that the "gilt plate" should be sent to him in London. Lady Harley prepared to obey, although there was

much difficulty in finding a "trunk" (or "truck") large enough to contain it. There were disturbances at Hereford and Ludlow, and Tom Harley was suddenly taken desperately ill—"so that, dear Ned, I find that one trouble follows another." A little later came the news that the Hereford justices were ordered by the king to call out the militia. Lady Harley's first thought was to write and assure her husband and son separately that she was "not afraid," and to ask for directions from Sir Robert, although by this time she can have had no hope of receiving any. The plate was at last despatched, and she managed to send with it a cake for her husband and to write to her son: "I am confident you are not troubled to see the plate go this way; for I trust in our gracious God, you will have the fruit of it."

Several attempts were made by Lady Harley throughout the month of July to be relieved of her post, but to no purpose. Whether Sir Robert had implicit faith in her power of bringing herself and her belongings through all difficulties, or whether he honestly believed that she was as safe at Brampton as anywhere else, or whether he were as selfish and careless in his domestic life as most enthusiasts are apt to be, the result was the same. His wife and young children were deserted in their hour of need by the one who should have been their chief protector. "If you think it best for me to stay I shall be content," wrote Lady Harley, "but I have little joy to stay when I see how little they care for

you who are worth ten hundred thousand of them. I pray God bless Ned and Brill."

After this she resigned herself to her lot, heartened by the faith that never abandoned her. "Since you think Brampton a safe place for me, I will think so too; and I would not for anything do that which might make the world believe our hope did begin to fail in our God." At the same time, her trust in a Higher Power was not enough to make her willing that Ned or his father—especially Ned—should run the risks she was ready to face. She wrote to both, reiterating her desire that neither of them should attempt to come to Brampton. She was very anxious that Sir Robert should send one of his acquaintance, of a religious spirit, to be with her "till the storms were a little over," and give her advice how to defend the castle; but she apologised for asking even as little as this. "Dear Sir, do not take this as if it arose from a distracted heart, but as from thoughts how best to prevent any evil; and most dear Sir, take all as from a wife that will most willingly do what you will have me do."

There is an exquisite blending of religious enthusiasm and practical good sense in a letter written to her son at this time. She begins by assuring him that she is not afraid, and trusts that the Lord will work for His own Name's sake. She sends the letter by a servant who is "such a roguish boy" that she dares not keep him at the castle; and as she dares not dismiss him there for fear he should join

the volunteers, or "some such crew," she despatches him to London with only money enough to "bear his charges up," and begs Ned to persuade him to go to sea. Then follows a postscript: "My cousin Davis tells me that none can make shot but those whose trade it is, so I have made the plumber write to Worcester for fifty weight of shot." Lady Harley might trust in God, but she was also fully alive to the necessity of keeping her powder dry.

Another letter addressed to her husband gives an outline of her plans for defence. She made choice of about twenty men in the neighbourhood, to whom she gave meat and drink and threepence a day. They were to be ready to assemble at beat of drum, and in the meantime were to come up to the castle by threes and fours to practise shooting.

News of these preparations spread abroad; and Sir William Croft, a loyal neighbour, came to warn Lady Harley that his old friendship for Sir Robert could not withhold him from doing his duty. Lady Harley thanked him, and assured him that her preparations were for defence, not for attack on the neighbourhood. Sir William hinted that there was probably a store of arms in the castle which it must be his duty to seize. "I told him," says Lady Harley, "I had no more arms there than for the defence of my home, and I would keep them as well as I could." Sir William recognised the impossibility of coercing one who by descent and by marriage belonged to an impracticable faction. "He

answered that I was Lord Conway's daughter, Lord Conway's sister, and Sir Robert Harley's wife and a woman of great spirit," and went away to write a long letter to Sir Robert, urging him to return to his allegiance to the king. Although the allusions to Sir William Croft scattered among Lady Harley's letters are usually somewhat contemptuous, it is evident that he was a man of no unkind heart.

In August or September, 1642, Lady Harley was gladdened by the arrival of her son, who, disregarding all her injunctions, came to share her peril. No worse danger, however, assailed them than a false alarm given by the discharge of two muskets "through some waggery," on a night when the garrison, after keeping a fast-day, had retired exhausted to bed. Sir Robert himself visited Brampton in the autumn, and occupied his leisure in raising levies for the cause of the Parliament. After a consultation with the Earl of Stamford, who was keeping in check the "malignants" of the west, Sir Robert returned to London in December; and Ned, who now held a command in the Parliamentarian army, could not stay to protect his mother.

The parting with her darling son was almost more than she could bear, and a letter written on a piece of cloth for better concealment shows how the brave spirit was quailing. "My heart has been in no rest since you went. I confess I was never so full of sorrow. I fear the provision of corn and malt will not hold out if this continue; and they say they

will burn my barns; and my fear is that they will place soldiers so near me that there will be no going out. My comfort is that you are not with me, lest they should take you; but I do most dearly miss you. I wish, if it please God, that I were with your father. I would have writ to him, but I durst not write upon paper. Dear Ned, write to me, though you write upon a piece of cloth as this is." Presumably Sir Robert could not be troubled to decipher a letter written on cloth.

The Marquis of Hertford, who, with Lord Herbert, was one of the Royalist leaders in the west, had now arrived in Hereford, and sent a letter to Lady Harley. Apparently it was a summons to surrender, for the Sunday after it was received was set apart by her and her household "to seek to our God"; "and then, on Monday," she says simply, "we prepared for a siege; but our good God called them another way."

The siege was only deferred, not abandoned. In January Lady Harley found that the Brampton Bryan tenants were forbidden to pay their rents, that the fowler might not bring her any game, that her young horses were driven away, and that it was not safe for any of her servants to approach the town. "I do not see how I can stay with safety, for they threaten to put soldiers into my house. I believe you do not imagine how they use me," she wrote to her husband with irrepressible indignation. In her next letter she confesses to having

feared that the relations then existing between king, parliament, and people might sadden him, "but they tell me you are cheerful." If under the circumstances Sir Robert could be cheerful, either his heart or his faith must have been miraculously tough.

Some crumbs of comfort were left for the brave lady. Doctor Wright, the kindly physician who had so often attended upon herself and her family, now came with his wife and took up his abode in the castle. The children were all well, and she succeeded in getting a parcel of linen to Ned.

At two o'clock on the afternoon of March 4th a captain and two trumpeters appeared before the castle, and delivered a summons from Fitzwilliam Coningsby to the garrison "to deliver up to His Majesty's use the fort and castle of Brampton Bryan, with all arms, ammunition, and all other warlike provision about or in the said fort and castle, under the pain to be taken and proceeded against both by law and martial force as persons guilty of high treason."

Lady Harley's reply was prompt and decided: "This is my answer. Our gracious King, having many times promised that he will maintain the laws and liberties of the kingdom, by which I have as good right to what is mine as any one, maintains me these, and I know not upon what ground the refusal of giving you what is mine by the laws of the land will prove me or any that is with me, traitor."

She sent copies of the summons and her answer to Colonel Massey, at Gloucester, and to her husband, to whom she wrote: "For what they lay upon me as being your wife, I think it more happiness to me, if I did suffer all that any man can lay upon me, in being your wife, than if I were the wife of any man breathing and did enjoy all the pleasures of the world. This I cannot but say, because I am likely to suffer. Dear Sir, be not too much troubled for me or your children."

From the correspondence already given, it will be seen that Sir Robert was not likely to trouble himself overmuch; nevertheless, uncertain whether he had received her first letter, she wrote four days later to assure him that "we are all very cheerful and not afraid," although Lord Herbert had commanded six hundred men and two pieces of ordnance to come against her, "which some say will be at Brampton to-morrow, and some, next week."

Again the attack was deferred, although for what reason is not clear. Perhaps the temporary successes of Prince Rupert in the neighbourhood of Oxford may have drawn off the Royalist forces from Herefordshire to join his bands. Once more Lady Harley could draw breath; but she relaxed none of her precautions, and took this opportunity of begging Colonel Massey to spare her a veteran soldier to regulate her garrison, which was nominally under the control of her son Robin, a boy of seventeen. Colonel Massey sent an honest and experienced

sergeant, who, like most of his fellows at that time, had learned his trade in the German wars. On the same day on which Lady Harley wrote to tell her son of his arrival, she wrote to Sir Robert: "I pray you to let Brill make me a plain black silk gown of as cheap a stuff as it is possible, without lace, for I cannot send to any town for anything. My Lady Vere's measure for bigness will serve me."

It was not only the Royalist ladies who had the power to bind faithful knights to their service; a young Mr. Moore at this crisis seems to have been of great assistance to Lady Harley, and there is a letter from a certain "Priam Davis" to his cousin, Captain Edward Harley, which breathes all the devotion of romance. Priam Davis had been sent by Lady Harley to Gloucester with a message for Colonel Massey, that some Royalist forces were at Leominster, very poorly armed and easily to be captured. Having done his errand, Priam was about to leave Gloucester, "having an injunction to return with all possible speed to your noble mother, with whom, had I a thousand lives, I would—so far as I know mine own heart—lay them all down in her service and defence."

Lady Harley had just lost a protector in her second son, Robin, who went to join his brother Edward in June. She could not refuse her sons to the service of their country; and as Edward had expressed a wish for his brother's company, she was well pleased that they should be together, although

the parting seemed to bring back all that she had suffered when her eldest son left her. "That you left me with sorrow when you went last from Brampton, I believe," she wrote to Ned on the last day of June, "for I think, with comfort I think of it, that you are not only a child, but one with childlike affections to me, and I know you have so much understanding that you did well weigh the condition I was in; but I believe it, your leaving of me was more sorrow than my condition could be; but I hope the Lord will in mercy give you to me again, for you are both a Joseph and a Benjamin to me, and, dear Ned, long to see me." There is a characteristic touch in the postscript: "I am confident you will hate all plundering and unmercifulness."

In another part of the letter is a sentence which strikes curiously upon the ear: "All Lancashire is cleared, only Lathom House." Lathom House was defended by one as brave and spirited as Lady Harley—a descendant of those Huguenots with whom the Puritans had so much in common, and it was a cruel irony of fate to array such women on opposite sides. But the war had parted friends and kin: Lord Conway had just quarrelled with his sister. The cause does not appear, but Lady Harley speaks with grief of a letter that he had sent her.

Towards the end of July, 1643, Brampton Bryan Castle was surrounded by Royalist forces under Sir William Vavasour and Colonel Lingen. On July 25th—"a day on which Lady Harley and her

young children were engaged in prayer and humiliation for the mercy of God to avert the dreadful judgement then justly feared"—the siege began. It is painful to have to confess it, but the cavaliers did not "play the game" in a sportsmanlike way. That their first victim was "a poor aged blind man who was without provocation killed in the street" may have been the result of a chance shot—his misfortune, and not their fault; but nothing can be said to excuse them for poisoning bullets (one of which killed the castle cook), or for poisoning the stream that supplied the village with water. The latter proceeding did not affect the garrison, as during their last respite Lady Harley had taken measures for water to be brought into "the green court," within the castle walls.

But there were others on the king's side who were more chivalrous. George Goring, lying in the Tower under the custody of Sir Robert Harley, wrote to his father, Lord Goring, who was then with the Court at Oxford, to ask that Lady Harley, her children, and servants, might be allowed to leave Brampton, and pass safely to London, "without any violence to their persons, or any plundering of these horses or necessaries which she takes for her journey." "I have received such noble and civil usage from Sir Robert Harley since I came under his command," explains Goring, "that I am very happy to have this occasion offered of making some return to him, though the quality, sex, and age of

these persons for whom I solicit, does merit all fair regard for their own sakes."

Probably in consequence of Goring's mediation, one Sir John Scudamore now appears on the scene, sent by the king to make terms with Lady Harley. But neither his fair words nor his artful allusions to "the pitiful cries of the poor people of this neighbourhood against the ill counsel your Ladyship hath followed to their and your own misery," had any effect upon the *châtelaine* of Brampton Bryan. The famous Countess of Dunbar, when besieged in her castle, assailed the English with coarse taunts and jests; Lady Harley's replies to her enemies are full of courtesy, yet they breathe the same undaunted spirit that dictated Black Agnes's defiance to Montagu and his engines of war. Finding his errand fruitless, Sir John returned to Court, with a last warning—intended, perhaps, to appeal to the thriftiness of a good housewife—that after such a refusal of the king's mercy, did she afterwards repent she and all her garrison must sue for pardons under the Great Seal, "which will not be without charge and trouble."

For six weeks the castle defied the besiegers, at the end of which time the operations in and about the Forest of Dean obliged Vavasour and Lingen to hurry their forces towards Gloucester. They left desolation behind them. Brampton church, rectory, and village were destroyed, together with all the outbuildings belonging to the castle and the mill

which stood about a quarter of a mile away. Lady Harley wrote a short letter to tell her son of her deliverance, and to ask whether she had better stay where she was or remove elsewhere.

Now, at the eleventh hour, Sir Robert was anxious that his wife should leave Brampton, and she longed to do so, but, as she wrote to Brill, "there was no stirring without a convoy." "Present my service to Lady Vere, the best and wisest woman I know. Be careful of yourself, and the Lord bless you, and, dear Brill, long to see your affectionate mother." It was the last letter that Brill was to receive from her.

While Lady Harley waited through the first days of October for directions from her husband about her journey, her enemies began to threaten her once more. At Hereford and at Leominster the Royalists were gathering, and Colonel Massey could spare but eight men, a barrel of powder, and a small quantity of match, to strengthen her defences. "My trust is only in my God, Who never yet failed me," she wrote to Ned. She was very ill with one of the severe colds to which she had always been subject, and hoped that "the Lord would be merciful" and give her health, as it was "an ill time to be sick in." "My dear Ned, I pray God bless you, and give me the comfort of seeing you, for you are the comfort of your most affectionate mother." To her husband, a week later, she wrote in much the same strain, finding consolation in the thought that all the children

were well, and praying for "a comfortable meeting" with him.

On October 29th Samuel Moore, whose presence had been such a support to Lady Harley in her trials, wrote to Richard Sankey—apparently a friend of the family—begging him to acquaint Sir Robert with Lady Harley's dangerous condition. On the Friday—two days previously—her cough had hindered her from sleeping, but, "having taken something to stay it, she rested and was pretty well" until eleven o'clock on Saturday morning, when she fell into "a fit, and was seized with apoplexy, lethargy, and convulsions." When Doctor Wright came, she was unconscious, but with his help she regained her senses, and at four in the afternoon gave hopes of recovery. In the early hours of the following morning—the time at which the fatal change generally takes place—there was a relapse, and Wright—"the careful doctor"—thought it best that Lady Harley's husband and son should be warned of her danger. "If the Lord should take the sweet lady, it is necessary there should be a head of the family. In my judgement the Colonel [Edward Harley] had best come," which looks as if Mr. Moore did not hold a very high opinion of Sir Robert's usefulness in an emergency.

On the evening of the same day Mr. Moore despatched a second messenger, whom he had kept waiting in case there should be any change in Lady Harley's condition. The change had come, and "at

six o'clock this Sabbath day," writes the trusty friend, "the sweet lady's soul went to keep the eternal Sabbath in Heaven where she can never be besieged."

* * *

With Lady Harley's death the story should come to an end; but some of those who have read this account of her trials and her devotion may care to know what became of those whom she loved when she was taken away from them.

Acting at Sir Robert's request, Doctor Wright and Mr. Moore continued to hold the castle; but in spite of a gallant defence, they were obliged to yield to Sir Michael Woodhouse in April, 1644. Only two barrels of powder were then left to the garrison, but they had provisions for a year. The castle was destroyed. Three of Sir Robert's children—Thomas, Dorothy, and Margaret—were taken prisoners, but they were soon sent on to Colonel Massey at Gloucester, the kindly Sir John Scudamore once more intervening, and thence they travelled to their father in London.

Sir Robert consoled himself for the loss of wife and home in the congenial employment of destroying the art treasures of Westminster Abbey, Whitehall, Greenwich, Canterbury, and Hampton Court. His accounts have been preserved, and contain such items as the following:

"1644. *May.*—Bills and receipt for £1 8*s.* by Thomas Stevens and others for taking down the

angels in the Abbey, and cleansing out pictures, and for cutting out a crucifix at the North end of the Abbey, and the pictures at the conduit leading to the new palace, and for taking down the cross at Whitehall, and for colouring the boards from which the carpenter had planed off the pictures."

"1644. *November* 2.—Receipt by Thomas Gastaway of £2 6*s.* from Sir Robert Harley for taking down the organ and organ case at Greenwich, and for making a scaffold to cut out the Resurrection where the Kings and Queens stand in the Abbey at Westminster, and for planing out seven pictures."

"1645. *June* 14.—Receipt by Richard Culmer of £8 12*s.* 2*d.* from Sir Robert Harley, being the proceeds of the burning of the embroidery called *The Glory* belonging to the high altar of Canterbury Cathedral."

The accounts include payment for nearly two thousand feet of new white glass to replace the stained windows of the Abbey, St. Margaret's Church, Greenwich Palace Chapel, and Hampton Court Chapel.

Like many others who had begun by throwing themselves heart and soul into the cause of the Parliament, Sir Robert soon found himself unable to approve of the lengths to which his party was going. He withdrew from public life, and after spending some years of the Commonwealth in London, settled in Ludlow in 1652, having been refused the leave to take up his abode in Shrewsbury.

His latter days were sad and lonely. His sons, like himself, were entirely out of sympathy with the ruling powers, and underwent imprisonment and surveillance as suspicious characters. His health was broken and his means were straitened. He never revisited Brampton Bryan or attempted to rebuild his castle, although, regardless of his poverty, he restored the church and parsonage at a cost of £1,450. There is a pitiful letter to his son Edward which shows how little was left to him of his property: "In my last I wrote you I had but sixpence left which I gave away yesterday at a fast—a private family. And though I do not remember that ever I gave so little on a like occasion, yet I never gave more, for it was all the money I had."

There is a pathetic touch in a letter to Brill from Edward, who was visiting his father at Ludlow, and found him very ill. He was compounding "the lime drink" for the invalid—doubtless with thoughts of his mother and the home-brewed medicines she used to keep in store for her family. Edward seems, as far as was possible, to have watched over his father's health, as Lady Harley had been wont to do. He consulted doctors on his father's account, sending down numerous remedies which they prescribed, and he procured "Aqua Mirabilis" and "Syrup of July flowers" (query, gilliflowers) from "my cousin Smith." He writes on one day to tell his father that "the monthly fast was kept at Mr. Nalton's church very sweetly, where you were

affectionately remembered," and on another to say how glad he is to hear that Sir Robert has ordered a sedan as a means of taking the air.

In November, 1656, Sir Robert's troubles came to an end. He was buried at Brampton Bryan beside his wife, and there is a memorandum in Edward's writing of the various preparations to be made for the funeral. Sir Robert's linen, as appears from another memorandum, was distributed among his poor relations—an act of kindness in which it is easy to recognise the work of Lady Harley's son.

After her mother's death Brill remained with Lady Vere, sharing her trials, although she seems sometimes to have been with Sir Robert. She sends a box of dried oranges in the midst of their troubles to comfort her brother, who was still as fond of sweets as in his college days, and corresponds with him on every opportunity. In 1652 we find Colonel Edward Harley and his brother Robert gravely discussing the proposals of Mr. James Stanley (grandson of the Earl of Derby) for their sister ; and as they approved of the marriage, it took place in the summer, to the great satisfaction of all concerned. Affectionate letters and messages passed between Mr. and Mrs. Stanley and Sir Robert and his sons. Good Doctor Wright was still at Ludlow, and able to take an interest—not very delicately expressed—in the bride's happiness. Her married life was not of long duration : James Stanley died in August, 1658.

Edward's kindness to the desolate widow was, as

his sister Dorothy bore witness, "extraordinary, but suitable to his constant practice." A piteous little note to him from Brill apologises for her delay in writing, as her journeys and her troubles have kept her from giving an account of herself. She will be only too thankful to accept his kind offer of taking her into his house rather than live by herself through the winter, if he can assure her that it will not inconvenience his family; and she will pay whatever he and his wife think fit for her board and lodging. She was kindly received by her sister-in-law, Mary Harley (*née* Button), whose children—"your two jewels," as Brill calls them—were doubtless a great comfort to her. Before long she had to console Edward for the loss of his wife, who died in 1659. A year later Sir Edward Massey writes to Colonel Edward Harley: "It has pleased God to take out of this life your beloved sister, Madame Stanley," who, like her mother, had passed away on a Sunday. "She is embalmed and lieth at Lincoln House [the residence of her mother-in-law], in that decent sort and right as a much lamented mourning-hearse of her condition and quality doth justly claim there by that honoured family."

There is no space here to follow the story of Lady Harley's best beloved son, but it may be said that he showed himself worthy of such a mother. By the time of the Restoration King Charles II. had no more loyal subject than Colonel Edward Harley, who was appointed Governor of Dunkirk. His energy

in providing the garrison with victuals and stores, in guarding against surprises from without, and against plots—chiefly those of the Capuchin brothers—within the town, recalls the courage and resourcefulness of Lady Harley.

All the differences with her brother which had caused Lady Harley so much grief seem to have been smoothed away as the current of events gradually drew together the moderate men of both sides; and we find Viscount Conway and Kilulta maintaining an intimate and diverting correspondence with her son. Like his sister, Lord Conway knew something of cookery and medicine, or thought that he did, and he also dabbled in science. He advises Edward as to the best manner of making war and of making lamprey pies, as well as on the choice of books: "I will advise you not to read the book that defends the lawfulness for a man to beat his wife. It is a godly man that writes the book and he brags much of God and His assistance; but if he had been assisted either by God or the Devil, he must have written a better book."

A long letter on the specific gravity of water and the results of boiling it, and upon the question of giving quarter to an enemy, is followed by one on religious topics. When Edward is taken ill, his uncle is anxious to know "how you found the ginger operated with you, or whether you used other remedies." Edward had been talking over the question of boiling water with his doctor, and had

come, with his assistance, to the conclusion that "in the much boiling the thinnest and finest parts of the water go away and leave only the most gross, unwholesome, and earthy parts"—a theory which apparently found no favour with Lord Conway. "There are not in the world greater fools than philosophers, nor greater knaves than physicians, unless it be the priests of this age, who are both."

Among the Hartley manuscripts is a paper in Edward's writing, headed, "A Catalogue of some of these many tender mercies my God hath vouchsafed unto me." It is a curious list, including such miscellaneous items as "Deliverance from the chincough and measles when I was very young. From the smallpox twice. From drowning, when I fell into the water at Brampton, and was taken out by a dumb woman. That in Oxford I was not given up to the evils of that place. That in London I was not seduced by evil company. That in the war God gave me any courage and esteem amongst men. That God mercifully denied my requests concerning a wife, showing me greater favour in the denial than if He had granted my desire. That God made me by a dream an instrument to deliver my father's house from being robbed, the window being broken. October 1660."

The entry about the wife does not sound complimentary to the lady on whom Edward Harley had first bestowed his love. Perhaps there is a suggestion of "sour grapes" in it; but under the

conventional phrasing there is much tenderness in the opening sentences of the "catalogue": "That my parents were noble, wise, and above all, godly. . . . That my God did mercifully continue me dear and blessed mother's life for several years, to teach me in my youth to remember my Creator. That my father, who was aged when I was very tender, was not cut off from me and my brethren and sisters. . . . That the Lord gave my parents hearts to give me liberal education, and inclined their affection to be very tender towards me. That my brethren and sisters and I love one another, which, oh Lord, be pleased to continue as becomes Christians, especially to watch against the sins of each other." Further on is an entry which recalls some of the passages in his mother's letters: "That my God never forsook me in any distress, but hath heard my prayers in all trials to direct, support, deliver me." The mention of Sir Robert as still alive shows that the catalogue must have been drawn up before 1656—probably about 1651. Brilliana Harley's son had learned her lesson well if he could write and think thus in poverty, sickness, and disgrace with the ruling powers.

Whilst reading Lady Harley's correspondence, one can hardly fail to be struck by the resemblance between her and Dame Mary, the wife of Sir Ralph Verney, who has become a dear and honoured friend to many of us since the publication of the Verney *Letters*. Both possessed in a high degree that

courage which is peculiarly feminine—the courage that, while counting the cost, is ready to face all and endure all without a murmur, for the sake of others. To a man in his need comes the fierce joy of battle, the exhilaration of the struggle; but to a woman only the dust and the weariness. By an accident of fate Brilliana Harley's undaunted spirit was called to sustain a beleaguered garrison, as Mary Verney's to console a band of exiles; the one overcame her foes by outward resources, the other by shrewdness and gentleness, yet the same strong enduring heart was in each, within a very weak body. Both dropped down, worn out in the midst of their labours, and both were mourned by husbands who had seemed to take very inadequate care of them during their lives.

Perhaps justice has scarcely been rendered to Sir Robert Harley in these pages. His letters to his wife must have been destroyed when the castle was taken, and thus he never has an opportunity of speaking for himself. Every man has two faces—one for the world and one for the woman whom he loves; and it may be that the face he kept for his Brilliana satisfied her desires.

For the rest, the foundation of every true woman's love is not the headlong passion of novelists and poets, but a mother's tenderness. He whom she loves is something to be consoled, to be made comfortable, to be kept out of harm at all costs—a child of larger growth, although she may at the same time

have a deep respect for him. The more unselfish she is, the more inconsiderate he will naturally be; and the more anxiety he may give her, the stronger grows her feeling of protecting compassion. Sorrows and trials may affect both equally, but her one thought will be to shield him so far as she may,—her chief conviction, that he suffers more than herself. No doubt Lady Harley credited Sir Robert with enduring far more from the siege of his castle when he was in Westminster than she did in the midst of her garrison. If in a moment of overpowering weariness she might reproach him with not realising how she was beset, she would have been the first to declare to the world—as she did to her son—that her husband's care and thought for her were her chief support. Whether it is well or ill for mankind, it is a happy thing for womankind that, when all is said and done, "the king can do no wrong."

III.

SOME BELEAGUERED LADIES.

BLANCHE SOMERSET (LADY ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR)
(*d.* 1649).

ANNE COVENTRY (LADY SAVILE)
(*d.* 1662).

MARY HAWTREY (LADY BANKES)
(*d.* 1661).

ELIZABETH FITZGERALD
(*d.* CIRCA 1724).

III

SOME BELEAGUERED LADIES.

BRILLIANA HARLEY was not the only woman left to defend her husband's castle during the Civil Wars. The name of Charlotte de la Tremouille occurs at once to the mind, and she is the most prominent among the heroines of siege. But a glance at contemporary memoirs and at the few newspapers of the time shows that beleaguered ladies were almost as plentiful as in the age of the "Mort d'Arthur," when the knight could scarcely ride a mile without having to relieve some noble *châtelaine* from the foes who had surrounded her castle.

Most happy were those whose dwellings were so insignificant or so badly situated that they were useless for military purposes. After having been kindly entertained by a Royalist lady, Prince Rupert was obliged to requite her hospitality by destroying her castle, since he could not spare men to garrison it, and durst not leave it in his rear to be held by the enemy. Among his *Sufferers for King Charles I.*, Lloyd mentions Lady Mary Winter, who defended the house of her husband, Sir John Winter,

in the Forest of Dean, "bidding him burn it rather than the rebels should have it."

Of a like spirit was Blanche, daughter of Edward, first Marquis of Worcester and wife of Lord Arundell of Wardour. Some account of the home of her youth and the order maintained there by her father may be found elsewhere; and readers of Dr. George Macdonald's *St. George and St. Michael* will remember the old marquis. Simple in the midst of all the state entailed by his position, as conspicuous among the courtiers for his plain frieze clothes as for his inconvenient habit of speaking the truth to his royal master, he retained to the day of his death—"poor in prison whither he was fetched in a cold winter"—that cheerful serenity which had delighted all guests within the walls of Raglan. "He suffered cheerfully," he told Sir Thomas Fairfax, "because he did before reckon upon it."

The daughter of such a father could scarcely fail to have caught some of his spirit; and when Lord Arundell's duty to the king obliged him to wait upon his majesty at Oxford in the spring of 1643, he left Wardour Castle in the charge of his wife. During his absence, on May 2nd Sir Edward Hungerford appeared before her gates, demanding admittance to search for "malignants." Lady Arundell refused to open to him upon any pretext; whereupon he sent for a body of the Parliamentarian forces under Colonel Strode, and formally summoned the castle to surrender.

The besiegers without were some thirteen hundred men. Within was a garrison of about fifty servants, only one half of whom were capable of bearing arms, commanded by a woman who was well advanced in years and was hampered by the presence of her two little grandsons, aged nine and seven. It would have been, at least, excusable to yield after a parley. But Lady Arundell was worthy of her trust, and her only reply to Hungerford and Strode was, "that she had a command from her lord to keep it, which order she would obey."

The besiegers were not slow in taking measures to reduce the garrison. On the following day, having dragged cannon within musket-shot of the walls, they opened fire. Their engineers laid two mines, which were both sprung, and the bombardment continued for six days and nights. Lady Arundell defended herself bravely; and she was well supported, especially by the women of the castle, who carried ammunition for the men, and were constantly on the alert to extinguish the "fiery missiles" that alighted within the defences. But no relief came from outside. Brave hearts could not supply the lack of numbers or increase resources and in the end they were forced to surrender after making terms.

To their lasting disgrace, Hungerford and Strode only kept to their agreement so far as to spare the lives of the garrison. Lady Arundell, her daughter-in-law, and her grandsons were made prisoners, and

the castle and estates were plundered and despoiled. The wanton damage wrought by Christian soldiers in their own country would have disgraced a horde of Goths and Vandals. Hungerford's soldiers tore up the park pales to let out the deer, felled the trees and sold the timber "for a few pence," and destroyed the fish in twelve great ponds by letting the water run away. Within doors they broke a chimneypiece worth £2,000, and ruined many "rare pictures, the works of the most curious pencils that were known in these latter times of the world." Finally, they loaded five carts with the "richest hangings and other furniture," and carried off their spoil and their captives towards Shaftesbury and Dorchester. Their intention was to confine Lady Arundell and her family in Bath; but as that town was then reeking with plague and small-pox, the high-spirited old lady had no intention of being taken there against her will. On reaching Shaftesbury she took to her bed, and declined to leave it unless actual force were used; while her daughter-in-law as stoutly refused to be parted from her.

Hungerford and Strode were furious, but helpless. To resort to violence would be to incense the whole countryside against themselves, and in these troubled times they durst run no unnecessary risks. So, "since they dare not carry all to Bath," says the *Mercurius Rusticus*, "they resolve to carry some to Dorchester, a place no less dangerous for the infection of schism and rebellion than Bath for

the plague and small-pox." Lady Arundell and her daughter-in-law were allowed to remain at Shaftesbury, but the boys were sent to Dorchester.

Lloyd reckons that Lord Arundell's loyalty cost him £25,000. Lady Arundell was released after a while, and died at Winchester in 1649. Her portrait shows a graceful, slender figure with a somewhat affected air, one hand toying with the end of her scarf, the other with a book. The small features scarcely suggest as much character as one would have expected, but the mouth is firm.

* * *

In the year after Lady Arundell's surrender another loyal woman was overborne by circumstances. A prominent member of Lord Newcastle's force during the northern campaign of 1642—1643 had been Sir William Savile of Thornhill, nephew to the ill-fated Strafford. After the capture of Sheffield, Savile was appointed its governor; but being too valuable in the field to be left behind four walls, in a short time he rejoined the army, leaving his wife and children in Sheffield Castle, which was in the charge of his deputy, Major Beaumont. He died suddenly at York in January, 1644, to the great regret of all who knew him.

In the July following, General Crawford, with twelve hundred foot, a regiment of horse, and three pieces of ordnance, summoned Sheffield Castle to surrender in the name of the Parliament. Major

Beaumont was disposed to make terms, regardless of the exhortations and entreaties which had been addressed to him by Savile—"if the castle chance to be besieged, keep it to the uttermost, as you love me." But the widowed Lady Savile was determined to carry out her husband's last wishes. The garrison included a troop of horse and two hundred foot, and had ten pieces of artillery. Round the castle were a moat eighteen feet deep, "a strong breastwork, palisadoed," and a wall six feet thick. It would be disgraceful to yield at once, when others had held out bravely with less defence; so at her instance Major Beaumont reluctantly defied the enemy to do their worst.

The two batteries raised by the besiegers, which maintained a steady cannonade for twenty-four hours, had little effect on the castle, and they were obliged to send to General Fairfax for more artillery. In the midst of the bombardment Lady Savile, who had been hourly expecting the birth of a posthumous child, was taken ill. The besiegers refused to let doctor or nurse pass their lines, and she was forced to struggle through her sorrowful hour with such help as she could get from those within the castle. But although a breach had now been made in the walls, Lady Savile preferred to die where she was rather than yield. At this crisis the soldiers mutinied, and insisted upon a surrender, "not so much concerned for their own danger" as for "the lamentable situation of this noble lady"—a

plea which any one who chooses may believe. On August 11th besiegers and besieged came to terms; and on August 12th Lady Savile's child came into a sorrowful and unsettled world. Happily for himself, he did not long survive his birth.

Furious as Lady Savile must have been to find her condition made the excuse for capitulation, the terms granted to her compare favourably with those accorded to other "malignants," and moreover they were faithfully observed. The garrison retired unmolested with all the honours of war and leave to carry away their property. Lady Savile and her children and servants, with a suitable guard, were at liberty to retire to Thornhill, the old home of the Saviles; and with a consideration for her state of health far more real in all probability than that evinced by Major Beaumont's soldiers, it was expressly stated that she need not begin her journey "until she or they be in a condition to remove themselves." *

Unbroken in spirit by the terrors of the siege or by the loss of Thornhill—which was accidentally burned down by a Royalist detachment after its surrender to the Parliamentary forces—Lady Savile played a leading part in the stirring events of the next sixteen years. She is said to have been responsible for the stratagem by which Langdale

* One of the children who went with Lady Savile when her party left Sheffield "with coaches, horses, and waggons," was her eldest son, George, afterwards Marquis of Halifax ("the Trimmer").

and the Scots surprised Pontefract in 1648, and for the device by which the Parliamentarian general, Rainsborough, was kidnapped within his own lines as a counter-hostage for Langdale, who had been captured at Nottingham. Rainsborough, instead of submitting peacefully to be carried off, struggled with his captors, and was accidentally killed, thus defeating their plans; and then Lady Savile succeeded in arranging Langdale's escape to the Continent. The ruling powers detested her, all the more because they could never manage to convict her of treason, in spite of the numerous intrigues of which she was the moving spirit. Undaunted by threats or by fear of detection, Lady Savile, having married a second husband, continued to plot and scheme for the good cause, to assist distressed cavaliers, and to relieve the suffering clergy of the Church of England until the Restoration. It is melancholy to find that the brave heart which faced death and privation without flinching was broken by grief and shame at the disorders of the new reign. In 1662 she "gave up her great and innocent soul to God," leaving behind her the character of "a Person of incomparable Affection to His Majesty, of singular Prudence, and of great Interest and Power."

* * *

Perhaps the best figure to be set in contrast to that of Brilliana Harley is that of Mary Bankes, the defender of Corfe Castle. Corfe Castle, like

Brampton Bryan, withstood one siege, and was forced to yield to a second. Like Brampton Bryan, it was laid in ruins by its captors, and it has never been rebuilt. In some ways we know more of Lady Bankes than of Lady Harley. The *Mercurius Rusticus* gives a minute account of the first siege, and there are allusions to it in many contemporary writers. On the other hand, most of the Bankes letters and papers were lost or destroyed when the castle was taken, and thus Lady Bankes never reveals her personality to us, as does Lady Harley.

"Brave Dame Mary," as she is called in the Isle of Purbeck, was the only daughter of Ralph Hawtrey, of Ruislip, in Middlesex. Her husband, Sir John Bankes, Attorney-General and afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, was a man of unusual wisdom and moderation, and earned the common reward of far-seeing persons by being derided for "timidity" at the beginning of the Civil War. Lloyd says of him: "He attained to great experience by soliciting suits for others; and a great estate by managing those of his own, laughing at many at last that smiled at him at first, leaving many behind him in learning that he found before him in time. He was one whom the Collar of S.S.S. worn by Judges and other Magistrates, became very well, if it had its name from *Sanctus, Simon, Simplicius*, no man being more seriously pious, none more singly honest. A Gentleman he was of singular modesty, of the ancient freedom, plainheartedness and integrity of

mind; very grave and severe in his deportment, yet very affable."

After the king left London in the January of 1642, when his attempt to seize Kimbolton and the five members had failed, Sir John Bankes remained behind to attend to his duties. He was respected by both sides, and found no difficulty in staying at his post, until it was represented to him that by his residence in London he seemed to countenance the measures of the rebels. He then went to York to join the king, who was summoning his counsellors about him. The plain speaking of the Lord Chief Justice was not relished at Court, and his letters speak of "the hazards he has run of the King's indignation in a high measure." After the battle of Edgehill, when Charles established himself at Oxford, Sir John Bankes came in his train, and took up his abode in the house of Sir Robert Jenkinson, who had married his second daughter, Mary. "His prudent and valiant lady, with her numerous and noble offspring," says Lloyd, "retired to her house, Corfe Castle," which had been purchased by Sir John from Lady Elizabeth Coke and her daughter, Lady Purbeck.

Those who have wandered among the ruins of Corfe Castle and seen the extent of its walls and the massiveness of its towers, may readily imagine it in the day of its pride. The illustrations in the third edition of Hutchins' *Dorset* give some idea of its past strength and its present majesty. Situated

on a steep hill, it was connected with the road by a narrow bridge, defended by a gateway with two towers. Those who passed the gateway found themselves within the first, or lower, ward, defended by eight strong towers, and separated from the second ward by a strong gateway with a portcullis. In the second ward were the dungeon tower and the prison chapel. A long flight of steps led from it to the third and fourth wards, separated from the lower ward by a steep rampart and a strong wall. Here were all the principal buildings: the great King's Tower, the Queen's Tower (where the lady of the castle lived), the kitchen, the chapel, and the offices. After tracing out, so far as is possible, the outlines of the apartments, the visitor to Corfe Castle is chiefly perplexed to know how our ancestors managed to live in so small a space. The modern convention of six hundred cubic feet of air to each person was unknown to those who occupied the room still pointed out as the chief bedchamber, and it is difficult to imagine how Lady Bankes and her daughters ever conveyed themselves and their best dresses ("the crimson satin petticoat with stomacher and sleeves lined with six silver laces" and other braveries, so pathetically enumerated in the list of plunder from the castle) up and down such narrow stairs, or were able to turn round in the rooms without sending everything flying out of the windows.

Lady Bankes' portrait is still preserved by her

descendants. It must have been painted after the siege, as she holds the keys of the castle and wears a mourning-headdress—the black veil with a triangular peak over the forehead, such as is seen in the portrait of the widowed Henrietta Maria. The face is not handsome, the nose and chin being too decided for beauty. But the clear, steadfast eyes and wide brow give an air of great strength and serenity, and there is something characteristic about the firm clasp of the large, well-shaped hand over the ponderous keys.

It is not clear how many of her "numerous and noble offspring" were with her in the castle. Her epitaph gives the names of only ten children, and at least two of her daughters were already married. A writer in *Notes and Queries* credits her with thirteen children, whose names he gives; but some of these must have died very young. If, after bearing thirteen children and educating ten, she had still the energy to hold out her castle for three years, she must have possessed extraordinary vigour, mental and bodily.

During the winter of 1642 and the early spring of the following year Lady Bankes and her family, unmolested in their retreat, watched the storm-clouds sweep across England and gradually draw nearer to the Isle of Purbeck. One by one the chief towns and strongholds of Dorsetshire fell into the hands of Sir Walter Erle* and Sir Thomas

* Lloyd calls him Sir William Erle.

Trenchard. Dorchester, Lyme, Melcombe, Poole, Portland Castle, Wareham, and Weymouth all yielded to the Parliamentarians, "who wanted this castle only to make the sea-coast their own."

By an old custom the "Mayor and Barons" of the borough of Corfe Castle had leave from the lord of the castle on every May-day to course a stag. The neighbouring woods had been famous for their deer ever since the days when venison from the isle was sent to the hapless Alienor, sister of Arthur of Brittany, who had acquired a taste for it in her long durance at the castle, and the hunt was usually followed by all the gentlemen of Purbeck. May-day sports were specially abhorrent to the Puritans, but on this occasion they seemed likely to serve their purpose. What would be easier, when "the hunt was up" and the castle gates were flung hospitably open, than to march troops of horse from Dorchester, to seize upon the unarmed cavaliers, and to take possession of their last stronghold?

Unluckily for the Puritans, some one got wind of their design, and, sending word to Corfe Castle, "spoiled the sport of that day" for all concerned. The hunt dispersed in every direction, and Lady Bankes closed her gates and bade her men keep them against all comers. Thus baffled, some of the enemy's force quietly withdrew, while a detachment under a few officers came to the entrance and humbly begged leave to see the inside of the castle

after the manner of a party of Bank Holiday excursionists. Hearing that admittance would not be granted them on any pretext, some of the rank and file lost their tempers and betrayed the whole scheme, "casting out words implying some intentions to take the Castle." It was in vain that their officers rebuked them and swore that nothing in the world was further from their purpose. Lady Bankes was warned, and proceeded to take her measures accordingly.

Her first step was to call in a guard for her defence; it cannot have consisted of a large number of men, but it alarmed the neighbourhood. "Whatsoever she sends out or sends for in, is suspected; her ordinary provisions for her family are by fame multiplied and reported to be more than double what indeed they were, as if she had an intention to victual and man the Castle against the forces of the two Houses of Parliament."

The castle was defended by four small pieces of cannon, which Lady Bankes mounted on their carriages. As not one of them would carry more than a three-pound bullet, this proceeding need not have caused grave uneasiness; but the Parliamentary committee at Poole immediately took alarm, and sent to demand their surrender. Lady Bankes returned answer that the pieces were very necessary for her safety, but that she would have them dismounted if she were allowed to retain them. The commissioners professed themselves willing to

accept this compromise, and the household at the castle enjoyed peace for a few days.

Very early one morning Lady Bankes was roused by the news that forty seamen were at her gates demanding the immediate surrender of the cannon. So entirely had she believed that matters were settled with the committee that she had only five men in the castle. Summoning them and her maidservants, she gave them her orders, and then went down herself to the gates and asked her visitors to produce their warrant.

They handed her a paper with the signatures of some of the commissioners. Lady Bankes glanced at it and gave a signal to her men and maids, who, while she parleyed, had succeeded in mounting the pieces and in loading one. They were not expert marksmen, but the "small thunder" which followed the discharge so terrified the forty valiant seamen that with one accord they took to their heels and ran away.

The beat of the drum echoing far and wide among the hills told the neighbours that the castle was in danger, and Lady Bankes was soon surrounded by "a considerable guard of tenants and friends," who brought in arms from all parts of the isle. But a new difficulty arose. The commissioners now threatened that unless Lady Bankes gave up her pieces she should be made to deliver them by force, and that the houses of all her allies should be burned down if they encouraged her to

resist. The wives of her guard, not liking such a prospect, hurried to the castle. "There they weep and wring their hands and with clamorous oratory persuade their husbands to come home, and not by saving others to expose their own houses to spoil and ruin." Moreover, the castle was unprovided with either food or ammunition for a siege, and the commissioners intercepted two hundredweight of powder, and forbade Wareham and other neighbouring market-towns to supply Lady Bankes with provisions. As the king's forces were drawing near to Blandford, a strict watch was kept to prevent a messenger passing in or out of the castle.

In this emergency Lady Bankes again proposed a compromise. She sent to the commissioners, and suggested that she should surrender her four tiny cannon if they would allow her "to enjoy the Castle and arms in it in peace and quietness," and again they accepted her proposal.

She knew well that there was small likelihood of her enemies keeping faith, but she trusted that an appearance of submission would throw them off their guard. Thinking that the castle was their own whenever they chose to take it, and that "now it was no more but ask and have," the enemy grew careless and relaxed their vigilance. "Brave Dame Mary" seized her opportunity. In a short time not only had she stored the castle with provisions, "a hundred and a half of powder, and a quantity of match proportionable," but she

had sent to Prince Rupert to ask him for some experienced commander to direct her. Like Lady Harley, she already had an old soldier, a Captain Bond, at her right hand to advise her. Captain Robert Lawrence, the officer despatched by Prince Rupert, was known to her, as he was the son of Sir Edward Lawrence, a gentleman of the isle; but he proved, in the end, a broken reed.

Lady Bankes' preparations were scarcely complete when she was again attacked. The weak point in the situation of the castle is that it is overlooked by the hills between which it lies. The enemy, having dragged two pieces of ordnance to the heights, imagined that the castle would be obliged to surrender. Finding their hope deceived, and perceiving too late their carelessness in allowing Lady Bankes time and opportunity to strengthen herself, they went away for a season, after burning four houses in the town.

On a misty morning towards the end of June between five and six hundred men, commanded by Sir Walter Erle and Captain Sydenham, came into Corfe, with "a demi-cannon, a culverin, and two sacres," according to the report of the *Mercurius Rusticus*. The *Mercurius Aulicus* explains that two of the pieces were thirty-six pounders—in spite of which the castle still held out. In the accounts of the county treasurer for 1643 is to be found a charge paid on June 14th "for loading and unloading great guns brought from Portsmouth to Corfe Castle." The church, which stands near

the gateway, was a most convenient station for the besiegers, who cut up the surplices into shirts, made powder-horns out of the organ-pipes, and cast the church lead into bullets.

Better men than the Puritans have made free with church gutters; but if the *Mercurius Rusticus* is to be trusted, their other proceedings were indefensible. They agreed to give no quarter, and repeatedly tried to corrupt the garrison with bribes and offers of a share in their plunder, if the castle were betrayed into their hands.

Bribes and threats being alike wasted, and the "heavy guns" taking little effect on the castle walls, Erle now tried a device which seems strangely antique even for those days. He constructed two "engines" of boards lined with wool, and set upon wheels, under cover of which his men might come within shot of the walls. In the treasurer's accounts are various items for materials used in making the "Boar" and the "Sow"—names which carry the mind back to the days of Black Agnes of Dunbar. Erle found his engines as little successful as Montagu did in like case. The "Sow" covered the bodies of eleven men, but left bare their legs, at which the marksmen in the castle took such good aim "that nine ran away as well as their broken and shattered legs would give them leave, and of the two which knew neither how to run away nor well to stay for fear, one was slain." The "Boar" was so discouraged by the fate of the "Sow" that it

made no attempt to advance; and the sole result of the labour and ingenuity expended on the machines was to supply the Royalists with a stock of jests quite as indelicate as those made by the Countess of Dunbar herself.

The besiegers began to lose heart; the common soldiers were weary of the whole business, and were not encouraged by their leaders' example. Dame Mary was here, there, and everywhere, taking an active part in all the defence. But "valiant Sir Walter never willingly exposed himself to any hazard; and to the eternal honour of this knight's valour be it recorded for fear of musket-shot (for others they* had none) he was seen to creep on all four [sic] on the sides of the hill to keep himself from danger." The castle walls, twelve feet thick, kept out their shot. They had expended much time and ammunition and the lives of several men, yet they were no nearer to the plunder of the castle than at the beginning of the siege. The garrison were quick to realise the despondency of their foes, and took a delight in annoying them by feats of bravado. Once they made a sally and fetched in nine head of cattle, without loss or injury to themselves. Soon afterwards five boys, desirous of imitating their elders, carried off four cows. These feats were not undertaken on account of any deficiencies in Lady Bankes' larder, but simply to vex the enemy. "They that stood on the hills

* *I.e.* the garrison, who had no cannon.

called to one in a house in the valley, crying 'Shoot, Anthony.' But Anthony thought it good to sleep in a whole skin, and durst not look out, so that afterwards it grew into a proverbial jeer from the defendants to the assailants 'Shoot, Anthony!'" The besiegers grew sulky and despondent. Even when Sir Walter Erle sent a party to wreck the house of Captain Lawrence's father, although they left only the bare walls standing, and forced Lady Lawrence to take refuge in the woods to save her life, it yielded little satisfaction so long as Captain Lawrence himself was safely ensconced behind the castle walls, picking off with his musket any that strayed too near.

At last help came from the Earl of Warwick in the shape of a reinforcement of one hundred and fifty seamen, with scaling-ladders, petards, and other appliances. The rebels now determined upon taking the castle by storm. A transient gleam of success was shining upon the king's cause. Sir William Waller had been defeated at Roundway Down, Prince Rupert had seized Bristol, and Lord Carnarvon was marching into Dorsetshire with nearly two thousand troops. If Erle were ever to gain possession of Corfe, it must be done speedily. How he fared in his grand assault may be told in the words of the *Mercurius Rusticus*:

"They make large offers to him who shall first scale the wall—£20 to the first, and so by descending sums a reward to the twentieth; but

all this could not avail with these silly wretches, who were brought thither, as themselves confessed, like sheep to the slaughter, some of them having exchanged the manner of their death, the halter for the bullet, [the enemy] having taken them out of gaols; one of them being taken prisoner had letters testimonial in his hands whence he came; the letters, I mean, when he was burned for a felon being very visible to the beholders. But when they found that persuasion could not prevail with such abject low-spirited men, the commanders resolve on another course, which was to make them drunk, knowing that drunkenness makes some men fight like lions that being sober would run away like hares. To this purpose they fill them with strong waters, even to madness, and ready they are now for any design; and for fear Sir Walter should be valiant against his will, like Cæsar, he was the only man almost that came sober to the assault; an imitation of the Turkish practice (for certainly there can be nothing of Christianity in it, to send poor souls to God's judgement-seat in the very act of two grievous sins, rebellion and drunkenness), who to stupefy their soldiers and make them insensible of their dangers, give them opium."

There is proof that the *Mercurius Rusticus* did not slander Sir Walter's troops in an entry of the county treasurer's accounts. Here we find:

"*August* 2, 1643.—For a firkin of hot waters for the soldiers when they scaled the Castle, £1. 12. 0."

Lloyd asserts that the men were actually dosed with opium as well as with spirits, but this is scarcely probable. No one was likely to have been at the assault who understood much of drugs, and the effect of opium, administered by an inexperienced hand, would have been stupor rather than recklessness.

"Being now armed with drink, they resolve to storm the Castle on all sides, and apply their scaling-ladders, it being ordered by the leaders (if I may, without a solecism, call them so that stood behind and did not so much as follow) that when twenty were entered they should give a watchword to the rest, and that was 'Old Watt'—a word ill-chosen by Sir Watt Erle, and considering the business in hand little better than ominous, for if I be not deceived, the hunters that beat bushes for the fearful timorous hare call him Old Watt.

"Being now pot-valiant and possessed with a borrowed courage which was to evaporate in sleep, they divide their forces into two parties, whereof one assaults the middle ward, defended by valiant Captain Lawrence and the greater part of the soldiers; the other assault the upper ward which the Lady Bankes (to her eternal honour be it spoken) with her daughters, women, and five soldiers undertook to make good against the rebels, and did bravely perform what she undertook; for by heaving over stones and hot embers they repelled the rebels and kept them from climbing the ladders thence

to throw in that wildfire which every rebel had already in his hand.

"Being repelled and having in this siege and this assault lost and hurt an hundred men,* Old Sir Watt, hearing that the King's forces were advanced, cried and ran away crying, leaving Sydenham to command in chief, to bring off the ordnance, ammunition, and the remainder of the army; who, afraid to appear abroad kept sanctuary in the church till night, meaning to sup and run away by starlight; but supper being ready and set on the table, an alarm was given [doubtless through Dame Mary's contrivance] that the King's forces were coming.

"This news took away Sydenham's stomach; all this provision was but messes of meat set before the sepulchres of the dead; he leaves his artillery, ammunition, and (which with these men is something) a good supper and ran away to take boat for Poole, leaving likewise at the shore about an hundred horse to the next takers, which next day proved good prize to the soldiers of the Castle. Thus, after six weeks' strict siege, this Castle, the desire of the rebels, the tears of Old Sir Watt, and the key of those parts, by the loyalty and brave resolution of this honourable lady, the valour of Captain Lawrence, and some eighty soldiers (by the loss only of two men) was delivered from the

* "Captain Lawrence at the last assault so well received them that sixty were killed."—*Mercurius Aulicus.*

bloody intentions of these merciless rebels, on the 4th of August, 1643."

Sir John Bankes, released for a time from his official duties, now returned home to wife and children. He was not sanguine for the future, but he can scarcely have failed to rejoice in the safety of household and property, although the church at his gate stood roofless and the cottages were ruined. His last visit to his family was not of long duration. In December Charles summoned a rival Parliament to meet at Oxford, and among those who were assembled in the great hall of Christchurch in January, 1644, was Sir John Bankes. Grievous as the parting was between husband and wife, Lady Bankes had this consolation, that two of his children would care for him and send her reports of his health and actions. He was, as before, to stay in the house of Lady Jenkinson, and his eldest daughter, "the excellent Lady Burlace," would be in Oxford with her husband, who was member for Corfe Castle. Sir John Burlace, who afterwards "suffered several imprisonments and decimations from the King's enemies," is extolled by Lloyd for being "very civil upon all occasions to his friends."

The months passed wearily for Lady Bankes in her stronghold, as closely beset as in the days before the first siege. Fortune had deserted the Royalists, and one by one all the fruits of their early successes were lost. Weymouth, Dorchester, and Wareham once more yielded to the rebel forces. Lady Bankes

was proclaimed a "malignant" by the Parliament at Westminster, and Corfe Castle was declared to be forfeited.

In the last days of December, 1644, a crushing sorrow fell upon the brave lady. Sir John Bankes died suddenly at Oxford in the fifty-fifth year of his age. His two eldest daughters were with him; but his illness was so short that his wife can scarcely have heard of it until all was over. He was buried in Christchurch Cathedral, where a slab records in Latin his dignities, his virtues, and the text which he would fain have had for his sole epitaph: "Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo sit gloria."

Lady Bankes had no time to nurse her grief. She was practically alone in a hostile neighbourhood, and the garrison which had been put into the castle after the siege consisted of soldiers brought from a distance, commanded by officers who were unknown to her. Far happier would it have been for her, as the event proved, had she been left with only the help of Captain Bond, her tenants, and her serving-men and maids.

After the battle of Naseby had given a death-blow to the hopes of the Royalists, the blockade around Corfe Castle tightened. The Governor of Poole, Colonel Bingham, had orders to reduce the castle by force. In the winter of 1645—1646 its plight seemed desperate; and a young Royalist, Colonel Cromwell, hearing that helpless ladies were within

its walls, conceived and executed a scheme worthy of a knight-errant in a romance of chivalry. Gathering about him a troop of one hundred and twenty men, he decked them with the orange-tawny scarves worn by the rebels, and rode at utmost speed from Oxford into Dorsetshire. With the coolest effrontery he rode through the streets of Wareham, while the sentinels, suspecting nothing, saluted him, and drew rein before the house of the governor, Captain Butler. For some reason or other Butler divined that all was not as it should have been, in spite of the orange-tawny scarves, and opened fire from his house upon the troop. In nowise dismayed, but feeling that there was no time to be lost, Cromwell fired a house close to the governor's lodgings which adjoined the powder-magazine. The governor, having no wish to be blown into the air, yielded himself a prisoner, and was mounted behind a trooper. Two committee men on whom the Royalists had managed to seize were also caught to the saddle, and the whole band clattered out of Wareham before the townspeople could regain their senses, and swept on to the castle. Their coolness and audacity brought them safely through a body of the enemy drawn up between them and the gate, and Colonel Cromwell had the pleasure of presenting his captives as an offering to Lady Bankes.

Fain would he have carried away the lady and her daughters to a place of safety; but so long as it was possible to remain she would not leave the

fortress that her husband had trusted her to keep. So Colonel Cromwell was forced to ride away again with his task half done, and on his return was taken prisoner by the enemy, while his little band was scattered far and wide. Some of its members returned to the castle, where their prisoners, in an evil hour for the garrison, had been left in Lady Bankes' keeping.

Robert Lawrence, who had been the lady's chief stay in the first siege, was now growing weary of a hopeless resistance. He had suffered enough for a lost cause; his loyalty had already been rewarded by the destruction of his father's home. It was far better to make terms while it was still in their power to do so, than to prolong the struggle for a few weeks, only to yield unconditionally to overwhelming force. Lady Bankes would listen to none of these considerations, and Lawrence turned to one who was as weary of the siege as himself and was liberal with promises of reward. The household awoke, one winter's morn, to find that Captain Butler had made his escape and that Lawrence had gone with him.

If an old friend who had been with her in jeopardy of his life could thus desert Lady Bankes, it was not strange that another member of her garrison should betray her. Lieutenant-Colonel Pitman, one of the officers who had been sent to her aid, was tired not only of the siege, but of the king's service, and wished to make friends with the victorious

party. He found means to let the enemy know that if he were assured of protection for himself he would put the castle into their hands. The offer was accepted, and Pitman cast about him for a stratagem by which he might accomplish his treason with as little risk as possible. Fate played into his hands. His brother had been taken prisoner by the besiegers, and a Parliamentarian officer was confined in the castle. He proposed to Colonel Anketil, the governor of the castle, that he should obtain a pass from the enemy on the pretext of arranging an exchange of prisoners, and should take that opportunity of bringing a hundred men from Somersetshire to strengthen the garrison.

Colonel Anketil fell into the snare, and readily assented. Having obtained his pass, Pitman hurried away to Colonel Bingham, who commanded the besieging force, and proposed to introduce a hundred of them into the castle instead of the promised reinforcements. Bingham, who was an honourable gentleman, must have loathed the traitor, but he could not refuse to profit by his treason.

Tradition still shows a little sallyport in the wall near the chapel to which Pitman led his men on a February night, and found Anketil ready to receive them. At the last moment the governor's mind misgave him, and after admitting fifty men he ordered the port to be shut, saying that he now had as many as he wanted. While Pitman angrily remonstrated with him for this treatment of allies

who had come so far and at so great a risk, the men quietly possessed themselves of the King's Tower and the upper wards. Having been drawn from Weymouth and Lulworth, some of them knew the castle, and they shut the garrison into the lower ward, which had always been considered the post of danger. Only six men had been left to guard the upper ward, and these were easily overpowered. When dawn broke and the garrison discovered their position, they opened fire, but it was in vain; between the foe above and the foe without they were helpless. Honour was safe, and there was no disgrace in sparing useless bloodshed.

So Brave Dame Mary yielded to treachery that which force had not been able to wring from her. A tragedy was but narrowly averted. Some of the besiegers were so eager for their promised share in the plunder of the castle that they set a ladder against the wall, without waiting for the gates to be opened. The garrison, misunderstanding their action, fired upon them, and but for Colonel Bingham's authority a general massacre would have followed. As it was, only two of the garrison and one of the enemy lost their lives.

The details of this last siege and of the surrender that have come down to us are so meagre that it is impossible to decide when Lady Bankes' resistance was ended. It is most probable that Pitman introduced his contingent on the night of February 26th, 1646, and that the castle was surrendered on the

morning of the 27th. It was well stocked with provisions and supplies, and no less than seventeen barrels of powder were found in it.

After it had been stripped bare of its furniture, hangings, and plenishings, for many months the county sequestrators laboured to destroy it. Lady Bankes' descendant, who wrote *The Story of Corfe Castle*, says: "There are not a few of the fair mansions in Dorsetshire which have been constructed in a large measure with the stone and timber carried away from this castle." Sir Walter Erle seized this occasion of avenging his defeat, and carried away five or six cartloads of building-materials to restore his own house, which had suffered in the late disturbances.

All the Bankes property was sequestrated. Ralph Bankes, the heir to Corfe, had to pay £1,974, Lady Bankes and her younger children £1,400, as a penalty for their offences against the State. When Charles II. came to his father's throne, he knighted Ralph, granting him an augmentation to his coat-of-arms, and graciously permitted him to take possession of his estates and property—if he could. The estates, not having been specifically granted to any friend of the Parliament, were obtainable; but all of the property taken from the castle that was recovered by Ralph seems to have been a feather bed (from which the feathers had been abstracted), a red velvet chair, and a set of fine old damask table-linen. Sir Walter Erle, when

required to disgorge his share of the plunder, replied that it had long been in his mind to speak to Sir Ralph on the subject, and that he "had something in readiness to present you withal upon occasion, and that merely in regard that having kept my hands free from things of that nature in general, it went against the hair with me to silence that particular as to yourself." But so far from offering that "something" now that the opportunity occurred, he protested, first, that he was in no way "compellable to make satisfaction"; secondly, that the timber and stone had been taken by his servants during his absence and without his knowledge; and thirdly, that what he had was "in point of value no such great matter." On their next meeting he would be happy to discuss the question, and "nothing that is reasonable, whether in law or equity (for to me all is one)," should be denied to Ralph. And this was all the satisfaction that was to be obtained of "Old Sir Watt."

Only the fortune of a Chicago pork-butcher or a South African adventurer could have rebuilt Corfe Castle, and such characters were unknown at the time of the Restoration—happily for that much-abused period. The ruins stand in lonely grandeur, the ivy clinging about the towers rent asunder by the gunpowder, for which so heavy a charge was made in the county rates. Sir Ralph built himself a family mansion at Kingston Lacy from a design by Inigo Jones, and doubtless found

it a more convenient dwelling-place than the old feudal castle.

Lady Bankes did not live to see her son's new home. After leaving Corfe, she seems to have returned to her birthplace, and her monument is in the chancel of Ruislip Church, with those of other Hawtreys. Her last illness was so sudden that her son Sir Ralph was married to a Dorsetshire heiress on the very day of her death.

Her epitaph, probably written by Sir Ralph himself, is worthy of its subject:

"To the memory of the Lady Mary Bankes, only daughter of Ralph Hawtrey of Rislipp [sic] in the county of Middlesex, Esquire, the wife and widow of the Honourable Sir John Bankes, Knight, late Lord Chief Justice of His late Majesty's Court of Common Pleas, and of the Privy Council to His late Majesty Charles the First of Blessed Memory; Who, having had the honour to have borne with a constancy and courage above her sex a noble proportion of the late calamities, and the happiness to have outlived them so far as to have seen the restitution of the Government, with great peace of mind laid down her most desired life, the 11th day of April, 1661."

* * *

Lastly, as a complete contrast to any of the gentle but high-spirited dames whose stories have been told here, let us turn to a forgotten book—*Personal*

Sketches of His Own Times, by Sir Jonah Barrington. His great-aunt, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, was besieged by the Jacobites in her Castle of Moret, near Cullenagh, in 1690, and the tale of her defence was handed down by oral tradition from generation to generation, until it reached the ears of Jonah Barrington, then a child on his grandfather's estate. He solemnly declares that every incident is "strictly matter of fact"; and although it seems almost too good to be true, it is certainly too good to be forgotten.

Squire Stephen Fitzgerald, the husband of this heroic lady, was of a peaceful, not to say supine, disposition, and left everything in her hands. In Castle Moret, among her tenants and retainers, she ruled a queen, with as much power as any petty chieftain in the days "when Malachy wore the collar of gold." Some years later, when Ireland was supposed to be comparatively civilised, a hasty word from Sir Jonah Barrington's grandmother, misunderstood by her servants, led to the cropping of a neighbour's ears; and when Elizabeth Fitzgerald managed her husband and his estates, no law save her word was known to their numerous dependants.

James II.'s desperate attempt to regain in Ireland what he had lost in England set that unhappy country in a blaze from one end to the other. Any one who had a grudge to avenge, a feud to prosecute, who wished to regain his own property or to seize upon that of a neighbour, availed himself of this

opportunity to take up arms. In the public distractions it would be easy to pay off old scores; and the greatest in the land were too busy with their own concerns to interfere if private individuals were quietly settling a few differences among themselves.

For many generations there had been a deadly quarrel between the Fitzgeralds of Castle Moret and their neighbours, the O'Cahills. It dated from the time of Queen Elizabeth, when the head of the O'Cahills had been dispossessed of Castle Moret, which was bestowed on a Fitzgerald. Now that the king was expected to enjoy his own again, the O'Cahills mounted the white cockade, and proceeded to show their loyalty by an attack upon Castle Moret, which was supposed to be under the protection of the orange flag. Needless to say, neither Fitzgeralds nor O'Cahills troubled themselves as to which king was their nominal lord: a revolution was merely regarded as an event which gave additional facilities for faction-fights.

Castle Moret, not so strongly defended by nature as Corfe Castle, resembled it in possessing no cannon at the time of its need. The forty stout warders who formed the garrison used large stones to keep off their enemies' approach. A hole over the entrance to the castle allowed one of the defenders, unseen and protected from all risks, to drop down anything that he pleased upon the heads of those below. A spring known as St. Bridget's Well supplied the castle with water, and there was ample

store of provision in the vaults. The O'Cahills possessed few guns, and "there was not a single piece of ordnance in the country, except those few which were mounted in the Fort of Dunnally, or travelled with the King's army, and to speak truth, fire-arms then would have been of little use, since there was not sufficient gunpowder among the people to hold an hour's hard fighting."

With all this in her favour, Elizabeth Fitzgerald was ready to defy one and all, and disposed herself to wait events with a cheerfulness that was not shared by her husband, who had a presentiment that his end was drawing near.

The O'Cahills, having collected their forces, prepared to attack Castle Moret, and great was their surprise and delight when, on approaching the walls after nightfall, they were allowed to draw near to the main entrance unchallenged. Believing the garrison to be asleep or careless, they heaped combustibles about the gate, and, exulting in the unpleasant wakening in store for the Fitzgeralds, they were about to set fire to it. But, hidden from them by the darkness of the night, the warders were on the alert at their posts, well supplied with the heavy stones that were their only ammunition; others were in the hole over the entrance, with gallons of boiling water. Just as the O'Cahills were clearly visible by the flare of their own lights, a deluge poured down upon their heads, putting out the fire and scalding them cruelly. In vain

did those who were not disabled by their injuries attempt to run away. A hail of stones fell on them in all directions from battlement and parapet, hurled by the warders, who were commanded by Elizabeth Fitzgerald herself, and assisted by her maids. Stephen Fitzgerald, the nominal lord of the castle, had taken the precaution of hiding behind a parapet, safe from friends and foes.

"The old traditionists of the country often told me," says Sir Jonah, "that at daybreak there were lying above a hundred of the assailants under the castle walls—some scalded, some battered to pieces, and many lamed so as to have no power of moving; but my good aunt kindly ordered them all to be put out of their misery, as fast as ropes and a long gallows, erected for their sakes, could perform that piece of humanity."

The rest of the O'Cahills seemed to have made good their retreat, for no sign of them was to be seen when the well-intentioned Stephen Fitzgerald came out of his hiding-place in the early morning. All the household was too busy rejoicing over the victory to pay any attention to the movements of so insignificant a person as himself, and he stole down into his garden full of thankfulness that there was now some chance of his enjoying the peace and tranquillity of which his wife and the O'Cahills between them seemed determined to rob him.

Unluckily for the good man, the O'Cahills had learned a lesson from their foes, and, having feigned

a retreat, were lying in wait for their opportunity. Seeing the squire roaming unattended, they swooped down upon him and carried him off before any of his own people could attempt a rescue.

Elizabeth naturally supposed herself to be a widow, and was considerably startled when the O'Cahills again appeared in force beneath the castle walls on the following day, and, waving a flag of truce, demanded a few words with her. Stephen Fitzgerald, said their speaker, was here, a prisoner in their hands. If his wife chose to surrender her castle immediately, she should receive him in exchange, safe and unhurt; if not, he should then and there be hanged before her eyes.

It was a device which has been dear to all besiegers from the days when sieges first began, and on some occasions it has proved very useful. The ancestress of a family well known to the present writer was driven to purchase her husband's life by yielding to rebels the fort which he had been trusted to keep. But Elizabeth Fitzgerald was a more devoted patriot, or a less devoted wife, and her answer, as repeated to Sir Jonah Barrington by the descendants of those who stood at her side, was worthy of a Spartan matron:

"Flag of truce! mark the words of Elizabeth Fitzgerald of Moret Castle; they may serve for your own wife upon some future occasion. Flag of truce! I won't render my keep, and I'll tell you why—Elizabeth Fitzgerald may get another husband,

but Elizabeth Fitzgerald may never get another castle; so I'll keep what I have, and if you can't get off faster than your legs can readily carry you, my warders will try which is hardest, your skull or a stone bullet."

If she had hoped to defeat the O'Cahills by a show of boldness, she was mistaken. After the failure of the night attack their tempers were none of the best, and although they had played their trump card to no purpose, revenge was not to be despised. Poor Stephen Fitzgerald, whose worst offence seems to have been that he had married a termagant, was hanged within sight of his household, and after gloating over his dying agonies, the O'Cahills suddenly retired, leaving the corpse to be buried by the widow. "This magnanimous lady, after Squire Stephen had been duly cut down, waked, and, deposited in a neighbouring garden, conceived that she might enjoy her castle with tranquillity."

The battle of the Boyne, which gave the ascendant to the Orange faction, saved Sir Jonah's great-grandfather, Colonel John Barrington, from being strung up to his own castle-gate, and secured Elizabeth Fitzgerald from being further molested on the score of her zeal for the Protestant succession. Her unprotected state, however, gave great anxiety to her male friends, who drew lots among themselves to decide who should console her for the loss of Squire Stephen. The prospect of marrying a lady

who held a husband in such cheap estimation does not seem alluring, but Elizabeth Fitzgerald was as much beset with suitors as Penelope. There is no excuse for giving the rest of her adventures in these pages, and perhaps what has already been quoted is too broad farce to be linked with the dramas of Wardour and Corfe; yet the first siege of Castle Moret is so curious an illustration of some of the forms taken by the struggle between the Jacobites and Orangemen of Ireland that its insertion here may be forgiven. For the sake of those who are interested in this very unconventional heroine, it may be added that she succeeded in preserving her liberty and her castle, surviving till late in the reign of George I.

IV.

A GROUP FROM THE RESTORATION.

THE MARQUIS AND MARCHIONESS OF WORCESTER
(*d.* 1699, *d.* 1715).

THE LADY GRACE MANNERS (LADY CHAWORTH).

THE LADY MARY BERTIE.

THE HON. BRIDGET NOEL.

IV.

A GROUP FROM THE RESTORATION.

THE Courts of Charles II. and James II. have so often been described by contemporaries that we are all more or less familiar with the most prominent figures that attended them. Pepys, Grammont, Barillon, even good Mr. Evelyn, saw much of the seamy side, and were chiefly concerned with noting down the scandals of the day. It is not until we come to examine other letters of the time that have long been put aside and forgotten that we begin to realise that there were others besides Evelyn's estimable Mrs. Godolphin who could keep themselves free from the pollutions of the Court, although they might sometimes be obliged to visit it. It was not strange that the children of Robert and Brilliana Harley should retain their integrity and leave an honoured reputation to their descendants; they seem never to have mixed in the gay world, and to have visited London only on business. But in the very midst of the Court there were some who could enter into all lawful amusements, and enjoy music, painting, dancing, fine clothes, and

other pleasures of this world to their heart's content, without being led away by the evil example of the highest in the land.

One of the most picturesque figures among those who suffered in the cause of Charles I. is that of Edward, second Marquis of Worcester, known during the lifetime of his father as Lord Herbert, or Lord Glamorgan, whose scientific discoveries won for him the traditional name of "The Wizard Earl." Even in ruins Raglan Castle is magnificent to this day, and it is pitiful to read the account of its past glories written by an old servant who had waited on the first marquis. The old man's memory dwells fondly upon its bridges, its towers, its fair walks, one "set forth with several figures of the Roman Emperors in arches of divers varieties of shell-works," its "stately Hall, having a rare geometrical roof built of Irish oak," its large and fair windows "beaten down by the enemies' great guns," its "pleasant marble fountain called the White Horse, continually running with a clear water," its bowling-green, "much liked by His late Majesty for its situation," its gardens, orchards, and fishponds, its park "thick planted with oaks and several large beeches, and richly stocked with deer."

Then follows a description of the manner in which dinner was served in the household, "committed to writing, for that few or none remember this at this day." "At eleven o'clock the Castle gates were shut, and the tables laid, two in the dining-room, three in

the Hall, one in Mrs. Watson's apartments where the Chaplain sat, two in the housekeeper's room for the Ladies' women. The Earl [Marquis] came into the dining-room attended by his gentlemen. As soon as he was seated, the Steward of the House retired, the Comptroller attended with his staff, the server, the daily waiters, with many gentlemen's sons from £200 to £700 a year, bred in the Castle, my Lady's Gentleman Usher, my Lord's gentlemen of the table. At the first table sat the Noble Family and such of the Nobility as came there, served by gentlemen," and at the second table in the dining-room "Knights and honourable gentlemen"; also "my Lady's gentlewomen and other gentlewomen residing in the house," "and such gentlewomen strangers as happened to come," served by footmen. At the first table in the hall, presided over by the steward, sat comptroller, secretary, master of the horse, master of the fishponds, my Lord Herbert's preceptor, and such gentlemen as came under the degree of a knight, attended by footmen and plentifully served with wine. At the second table, which was "served from my Lord's table, and with other hot meat," was the gentleman server "with the Gentlemen Waiters and Pages to the number of twenty-four or more." At the third table was the clerk of the kitchen, with the yeomen officers of the house. Mrs. Watson entertained in her room "gentlewomen strangers that did not appear below stairs, and other gentlewomen that happened to be

there." Besides these, there were doctors, butchers, keepers, brewers, bakers, "footmen, grooms, and other menial servants to the number of 150"; bailiffs, ploughmen, tailor, saddler, plumber, cooks, rough-rider, farrier, and falconer. There is a touch that recalls the scene in Branksome Tower, when we are told that four of the grooms of the stable "had in charge no more than the great stables, for they watched the twelve war-horses there day and night." One who lived in this vast household, half-Romanist, half-Protestant, bears witness that in the space of three years he saw not a man drunk, heard not an oath sworn nor a cross word given, so perfect was the order that Lord Worcester maintained, and so great was the love for him of all his people.

All this half-feudal, half-patriarchal state and splendour came to an end in August, 1646, when the castle, having been garrisoned by the marquis at his own expense from the beginning of the Civil War, was obliged to surrender to Sir Thomas Fairfax. "Afterwards the woods in the three parks were destroyed, the lead and timber were carried to Monmouth, thence by water to rebuild Bristol Bridge after the last fire. The Great Tower, after tedious battering the top thereof with pickaxes, was undermined, the weight of it propped with the timber whilst the two sides of the six were cut through; the timber being burned, it fell down in a lump. After the surrender the country people were summoned

into a rendezvous with pickaxes, spades, and shovels, to draw the moat in hope of wealth; their hope failing, they were set to cut the stanks of the great fish-ponds, where they had store of very great carps, and other large fish." The wanton acts of destruction committed by the Puritans at this time were a disgrace not only to the lofty doctrines that they professed, but to ordinary decency and common sense.

Raglan could never be rebuilt by one who, according to his own estimate, had spent with his father £918,000 in the king's service, and the Restoration brought little but disappointment to Lord Worcester. Even the Dukedom of Somerset, promised to his father by Charles I., was not granted to him. Charles II. at no time of his life had any money to spare, and he could not afford to be too lavish of empty dignities to a faithful subject who had the misfortune to be born a Roman Catholic. A memorandum in Lord Worcester's writing, addressed to the king "to ease Your Majesty of a trouble incident to a prolixity of speech and a natural defect of utterance, which I accuse myself of," sets forth at great length the services of himself and his father to the rightful cause, and an undated letter expresses a hope that Lord Arlington will represent his case to the king. Had he cared only to advance himself, he might have enjoyed £40,000 or £50,000 a year beyond seas; and as it is, he "as good as wants bread." Gratitude was a virtue almost

unknown to the kings of his time, who seemed to consider that it was enough honour for their devoted subjects to sacrifice home, fortune, and life for their sakes, and Lord Worcester had no redress. In 1667 he was delivered for ever from hanging on princes' favours.

It is from the letters of his heir, Henry, afterwards the first Duke of Beaufort, that we gather a pleasant picture of an English family in the days of Charles II. Before succeeding to the marquisate, he had married Elizabeth, Lady Beauchamp, who, like his own kindred, had suffered much for the king. Her father, the good Lord Capel, after defending Colchester for his royal master in 1648, had followed him on to the scaffold in 1649 with a serene courage unshaken by the parting with wife and children, and a conscience untroubled save by the recollection that "out of a base fear and carried away with the violence of a prevailing faction" he had voted for the death of Lord Strafford.

Shortly after Lord Capel's death Lord Beauchamp fulfilled the traditions of his race by going to the Tower as a prisoner. "It seems it is a place entailed upon our family, for we have now held it five generations," wrote Lord Hertford when condoling with his son. "Yet to speak the truth I like not the place so well but that I could be very well contented the entail should be cut off and settled upon some other family that better deserves it." The close confinement broke down Lord Beauchamp's health; and although

he was released on very heavy bail to drink the Epsom waters, he never recovered from it. The exiled Charles II. wrote in affectionate terms to bid him "take heed of melancholique; I keep myself from it as well as I can, and so must you." Lord Beauchamp had not the light heart of Henri Quatre's grandson, and he died in 1654. Whatever may have been Charles II.'s faults, he was an ideal correspondent, and his letter of condolence to Lady Beauchamp, written from Paris, expresses full sympathy and deep respect within the space of a few lines:

"If the part I have borne in your late loss could have given you any ease, much of your grief would be abated, for indeed I have been exceedingly troubled at it, nor can I have many more such losses; you will believe I will do my part to repair what can be recovered, and to preserve what is left, and that I can never forget what I owe to you and yours, who shall always be as much within my particular care as the wife of such a husband and the daughter of such a father ought to be, to whose memories more regard cannot be paid than is due from, Madame, your very affectionate and constant friend,

"CHARLES R."

In 1657 the widow became the wife of Lord Herbert, as he was then styled, and it seems to have

been a very happy marriage. Business of State obliged him, after the Restoration, to spend much of his time in London, while she lived chiefly at Badminton, looking after the children, the gardens, and the property. But he wrote frequently to her, telling her all the news, from the debates in the House of Lords to the latest fashions. When he went with others to meet the king on his arrival in England, he begged Lady Herbert to come up to London, so that he might find her on his return, "for I cannot be anywhere with any contentment without you."

Either for his wife's sake or for his own, Lord Herbert enjoyed royal favour, sometimes at great inconvenience to himself. He once grumbles to his wife at being dragged out by the king to hunt with the Duke of York, who kept them without eating or drinking the whole of the day. The king, with great presence of mind, slipped away when the hounds were at fault, and was in good time for dinner at my Lord St. Albans'; but the luckless suite were obliged to fast, and had little sport to console them, as the duke's hounds behaved themselves "but very lewdly."

Soon after becoming Marquis of Worcester, he had the honour of standing godfather to one of the short-lived sons of the Duke of York, "and gave him by the Duke's desire the name of Edgar, the Duke fancying that name because he was the first King that had the dominion of the seas, which he

went upon about the kingdom, every year, with a thousand ships." "The Duchess would fain have had it James, but the Duke would not, because he had buried one of that name." Lord Worcester, with the experienced eye of a father, noticed that the child was small and not very well. Having learned what was customary for a sponsor on these occasions, he sent a hundred guineas to the nurse and monthly nurse. The wealthy old Duchess of Richmond, when she stood godmother to Charles II., had presented his nurse with a gold chain worth £200, the monthly nurse and dry-nurse with a quantity of plate, and each of his rockers with a silver cup, a salt-cellar, and a dozen spoons.

Some of the details of Lord Worcester's household arrangements are very curious. He was trusted by his wife to engage some menservants. Character, the ability to clean plate and wait at table, and other such qualifications had not much weight with him ; but he was very proud of finding two footmen that could play the violin. He also found another who was a great performer, but who refused to demean himself by wearing a livery. However, as this gifted person was not unwilling to give music-lessons to any of the household who were desirous to learn, including the page, Lord Worcester was delighted to engage him.

He was fond of his children, and was ready to pleasure them. At one time he is buying a pearl necklace for his daughter "Mall," with the stipulation

that she is not to put it on until she is two or three years older, for "till then the children of the greatest quality do not wear any." The set is handsome enough for her to wear until she marries; and then, he explains, as the custom is, it is to be transferred to her younger sister, and her bridegroom, or his friends, will give a better one to herself. One may imagine the pleasure of a girl when her elder sister found a husband. At another time he is preparing to send a coach and horses to his son at Oxford, who has begged for one, "though when I was at Oxford it was not thought necessary." Fathers and sons have not changed since those days.

Both the marquis and his wife were fond of sport—a taste which has continued in their family. His letters are full of references to hawks and dogs. His foxhounds were so good that the Prince of Orange, when he came over to England as the bridegroom of Mary of York, begged for some for his own pack, but begged in vain, as Lord Worcester did not choose to spare any. The white and pied pheasants were the delight of Queen Catherine when she visited Badminton, and she gave such a description of them to the king that his majesty swore that if he were not too lazy he would go and see them himself. Lady Worcester once suggests that if the marquis wishes to give the king a present, he should offer him a young peacock and peahen from Badminton, such as are not to be found elsewhere. They have milk-white heads and plumes,

their bodies and long feathers are ash-coloured, spotted with black, and their necks are like those of ordinary peacocks in colour.

The Popish Plot gave great trouble to the marquis, who had to pass many weary hours in the House of Lords, and also to his wife, who found that his servants were writing news to those in the country, by which means false reports were spread abroad. Accidentally she heard that the usher of the hall at Badminton had received a letter, and she insisted upon seeing it. Finding it to contain some very apocryphal stories of "Prance and Bedlow," she wrote in great indignation to her lord, telling him to forbid his servants to write news to their fellows. In her opinion they would do better to mind their own business and leave State affairs to those who ought to manage them.

The queen is seldom mentioned in these letters; but just at this time Lord Worcester had an audience of her, and was much gratified by her kindness and consideration. After the plot the queen was allowed to retain only nine ladies about her, who were not obliged to take the oath of supremacy. Three of these were ladies of the bedchamber, and by rights Lord Worcester's sister should have been among them. "But out of civility," explains the marquis, "she thinks she could do no less, since the King stuck to her and showed so much concern for her when she was accused, than to choose the Duchess of Portsmouth in the first place." This meant that

the two other ladies would have to be continually on duty—"in effect, they must be drudges"; and the queen, thinking such close attendance would be irksome to Lord Worcester's sister, was minded to excuse her from accepting the post. Yet so kind and considerate was the queen, for whom others had so little kindness and consideration, that she first sent to Lord Worcester to ask if his sister would agree to the arrangement, and he went from a stormy meeting in the council chamber "to give the Queen thanks for laying my sister so obligingly aside."

Lady Worcester must have had sad reason to detest the very name of the plot. Her brother, Lord Essex, had been Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when Plunket, the Roman Catholic Archbishop, was condemned to death for participation in one of these imaginary conspiracies. He now begged the king to save Plunket's life, protesting that from his own knowledge he was certain that the charge could not be true. "His blood be on your own conscience, my lord," was the king's answer; "you might have saved him if you would. I cannot pardon him because I dare not."

Lord Essex had not been used to lack courage or spirit. Among the Badminton papers is one headed, "A Character of Arthur, Lord Essex," which shows what could be said in his favour, and was preserved by his sister after the unhappy man had been driven by remorse to take his own life. In

1670—according to this authority—he was sent on on embassy to the King of Denmark, and when drawing near the coast was informed of the new rule, that all ambassadors should strike sail to the king's ships as they passed through the Sound, under penalty of being fired upon by the guns of Kronenberg ; but Lord Essex refused either to strike sail or to slink past the ships in the night and land at some distance from the castle. He would pass it at four o'clock in the afternoon, and those who were afraid might take boat and land elsewhere. Three shots from the castle guns, one of which tore his rigging, had no power to deter him, and he passed safely to the landing-place. The King of Denmark, receiving an account of this from the governor of the castle, sent orders that Lord Essex should be received with all possible respect, and escorted "with the greatest grandeur" to Copenhagen. Accordingly "the Governor and Great Officers of the Court" went to wait upon his excellency on the following day, and offered to accompany him to the city. "But His Excellency complained that the Governor had assaulted his ship, tore his tackling and rigging, violated the privileges of an Ambassador, and that it did not become him to proceed any further till his Master was righted and satisfaction made for the affront which the Governor had given upon his landing. Thereupon Commissioners were appointed to examine the matter, and upon the hearing they ordered that the Governor should ask His

Excellency forgiveness on his knees in the open street before his lodgings in Kronenberg; which act was publicly performed whilst His Excellency stood in his balcony, to the glory of the King of England, and the honour of the English nation."

Ill-health was probably the cause of Lord Essex's want of moral courage. In his youth he had been a very sickly child, and up to the age of sixteen, when he was taken prisoner by the Parliament, "had scarce rid ever on horseback, or been out of the family." It is curious that in the "character" the disastrous conclusion of his life should be attributed to the influence of his wife's cousin, Algernon Sidney, "whose conversation—and some others—misled him to all those errors and false principles which afterwards brought him to ruin."

Under the Stuarts, Parliament was accustomed to meet wherever it was summoned; and in March, 1681, Lord Worcester attended the king to Oxford for the opening of "the Short Parliament," as it was afterwards called. The University, always loyal, received the king with enthusiasm, in spite of the efforts to foment disorder of Lord Shaftesbury and his party, who entered the town, followed by bands of armed retainers all wearing ribbons in their hats with the device, "No Popery! No Slavery!" Personally, Lord Worcester did not enjoy his visit to Oxford. It was some consolation that his rooms and furniture in Jesus College were better than those of the king in Christchurch, and that his

bed in particular looked so well that, according to the servants, "many strangers came to see it." Yet he would far rather have been with his lady walking in and out among the workmen at Badminton; and the want of a cross-post from Oxford to Bristol was a serious inconvenience to him.

On March 25th he sends his wife a long account of a remarkable scene in the Parliament. Feeling on both sides was running high. A new informer, Fitzharris, had appeared with a cock-and-bull story of an attempt to poison the king, made by the queen. The Commons wished to impeach him, as a means of giving his perjuries the widest circulation. The king and the lords were determined to leave him to the ordinary course of law as a common libeller. Shaftesbury and some of the lords were planning to introduce an Exclusion Bill, to which the king was resolved never to agree. It was not a hopeful prospect for legislation, and Lord Worcester soon saw that the situation "could not consist with long sitting."

"Yesterday [March 24th] Lord Shaftesbury comes up smiling to our end of the House, and says 'I have an expedient put into my hand in this paper'—which he showed—'that will comply with the King's speech and satisfy the people, too,' and this he communicates to Lord Chancellor. I being near asked him whether I and some other lords by me might not see it. 'No,' says he, 'the King must see it first, and if you will show it him—for I must

not come up to him—then you shall see it.' Lord Chancellor—who would not leave his seat—said to me 'Pray, my Lord, do.' So I took it and then carried it to the King, thinking it truly some pleasant jest intended for the King to laugh at, for so it seemed by the Chancellor and his laughing, and I could not imagine that any serious man could think really to accommodate all things between the King and the Parliament in six lines, which was all I could see in the letter. When the King read it, he found the expedient was to settle the Crown upon the Duke of Monmouth. 'Ay marry,' says he, 'here is an expedient indeed, if one would trample over all laws of God and man.' Says Lord Shaftesbury, who came pretty near to see what would follow, 'Sir, will you give me leave to make it as lawful as we can?'"

Lord Shaftesbury had been nicknamed "Shiftsbury" for his ingenious devices, but this last was more than Charles could stomach. He burst into honest wrath, and gave those about him some sharp hits: "Whoever goes about such things can be no better than knaves. By the Grace of God I will stick to that that is law, and maintain the Church as it is now established, and not be of a religion that can make all things lawful, as I know Presbytery can, and overrule all laws that do not advance their religion; and in that they are ten times worse than the Pope, for though he will have all things under him that can be pressed to be in order spiritualities, he allows

it to be argued whether they are so or not; but the Presbyterians twice when I was in Scotland came into the Parliament house, and bade them proceed no further in some things that were before them, for they had judged them to intrench upon the Kirk."

Lord Shaftesbury tried to cover his retreat by saying "there was no Church nor clergy but would impose upon the Government," and Lord Worcester declared that the Church of England would never do so. There was sense as well as cynicism in Shaftesbury's retort that the Church of England and her clergy had never yet been in sufficient power and authority to try; but the king would hear no more. "I hope they are in authority now," he said, "and I will not be for lessening it, and if I do I know I lessen my crown, for we must march together."

The son of the martyr was speaking in words that must have recalled his father, but with more shrewdness and penetration than his father had ever possessed; and while Shaftesbury and his faction slunk away abashed, good men and true rejoiced. Lord Worcester's delight is evident, and after concluding his letter he adds a hasty postscript: "I must not omit one very good reply of the King's to Lord Shaftesbury. The King, speaking of standing by the Church and Government [Constitution] though he had never so few, said 'I am not like others, that the older they grow, the fearfuller they are. I think the less we can live according to

nature, the less we ought to value one's life.' 'Pray' says both Lord Chancellor and Lord Shaftesbury, 'do not be so unconcerned for your life, for in it depends all our good.' 'And yet,' says the King, '*I am the only Arbitrary Man.*'" *

Could Charles have always acted and spoken thus loftily, the Stuarts might now be sitting on the throne of England. But his better self woke only in starts and flashes, and there were too many about him ready to lull it to sleep again.

In a few days Charles dissolved the Parliament, and returned to London, accompanied by Lord Worcester.

Shortly afterwards, having searched in vain for some years, the marquis succeeded in buying a house in town. At one time he offered to rent a house from Lord Paget; but as he would only consent to give £100 a year, besides paying the wages of the housekeeper and gardener, and Lord Paget would not be satisfied with less than £200, the bargain was never concluded. With Lady Worcester's approval, he now bought Lady Bristol's house at Chelsea for £5,000, and was well pleased with it. The water supply, brought from Kensington in pipes, was very good, and the road leading to the house was so dry that he was generally able to walk from it to Lord Arlington's in a quarter of an hour, and to keep on the highway. This was indeed an unusual advantage for Londoners in the

* The italics are Lord Worcester's.

seventeenth century. In the year in which Lord Worcester bought his house Viscountess Campden wrote to her husband to complain of the difficulty of shopping, as she could not alight from her coach in the streets without being "overshoes."

When Charles II. took leave of his Parliament before going down to Portsmouth to greet his queen on her arrival in England, his last instructions to his faithful Commons were: "The mention of my wife's arrival puts me in mind to desire you to put that compliment upon her that her entrance into this town may be made with more decency than the ways will now suffer it to be; and to that purpose I pray you would quickly pass such laws as are before you, in order to the mending those ways, that she may not find Whitehall surrounded with water." The condition of the roads round Whitehall was incredibly bad. It was at this time that a little boy named George Clarke (afterwards a person of some reputation), riding with his parents in one of the new glass coaches that had just come into fashion, was thrown out into the road "over against the Horse Guards at Whitehall." The wheels of the coach "went pretty fast" over both his legs; but so deep was the hole in the pavement into which he fell that he "received no prejudice on them."

The mention of the "new glass coaches" recalls the fact that on their introduction into this country they were viewed with distrust by old-fashioned persons, as being not only unsafe, but unhealthy.

Mary Fitzjames wrote to her sister, Lady Harley (wife of Sir Edward), in 1662: "If I might advise you I would not by no means have you venture your boy in a coach, for I verily believe it was my first boy's death, and lately my cousin Churchill brought down a boy in a coach which was never well after it, but died."

Soon after getting into his new house, Lord Worcester was informed that the king would be graciously pleased to make him a duke. For the sake of the descent from the old dukes of Somerset, of which his predecessor, the Marquis Edward, had always been mindful, he chose Beaufort for the first title, and was afterwards vexed to find that it was not the one which his wife would have preferred. His honours seem to have had a bad effect on his temper, for his letters at this time are full of complaints: "much worried with his own and other people's business—turned out of bed this morning early in the ugliest mist ever seen or smelt, to wait upon the king on behalf of one Captain Matthews—feels it necessary to be more at Court than usual, which is no great delight."

The letters are now fewer in number, probably because the possession of the house in Chelsea gave husband and wife more opportunities of being together. There is a romantic story of buried treasure in a letter dated June, 1687. The Duke of Albemarle had knowledge of a Spanish ship, laden with silver, that was lying at the bottom

of the sea off the coast of Florida, and tried to form a company to recover it. Lord Sunderland, Lord Portsmouth, and others refused to take any share in the speculation, and the project "went a-begging for a great while." Now the silver was found, and the duke's share already came to between forty and fifty thousand pounds.* One of his partners, Sir Richard Hoddock, had unwisely sold his hundred-pound share a month or two previously; had he kept it, he would have had £8,000.

The landing of the Prince of Orange in 1688 caused great anxiety and disturbance throughout the country; and the Duchess of Beaufort, who knew only too well the horrors of civil war, suffered much. She wrote to the duke from Badminton on December 15th:

"Last night at two o'clock Mr. Cothrington sends me a letter that he had certain intelligence that a great body of Irish were come within five mile of Wootton Basset and that they burned and killed all as they came along. Some of your servants, being towards Anton, saw, as they said, a regiment of dragoons march through to Malmesbury in the evening. I wished him to send to give them notice. This morning, by that time it was light, he came hither, he sent his brother to Malmesbury, who returned him an answer that Andover was burnt;

* The Duke of Albemarle ventured only £800, and his share is said by Charles Bertie ultimately to have been valued at £500,000, which seems scarcely probable.

with this he and I thought it but a story, and I was pretty quiet; but about eleven o'clock he comes with a troop of gentlemen he said that were come to defend me, and to be directed by me what to do, but with news that Reading and Newbury was burnt, and that they* were come as far as Marlborough. I thanked them, and wished them to march up, for that it was always, I have heard, better to fight an enemy out of one's own country. But still they delayed going away; at last he came and told me they wanted arms and heard I had some here, and cannon. I told them I had about sixty muskets to defend the house, and that it would be strange that gentlemen that came to assist me should take away what I had to defend me."

Nevertheless, her defenders insisted upon carrying off the muskets, and the duchess was obliged to content herself with making a note of their names. "The country is in a great disturbance; I trust you are safe where you are." Woman-like, she adds: "I would not for anything in the world you were here. I hope in God all will be quiet again in a little time, the hopes that you are safe makes me very courageous." Her danger was real enough. She was assured "by very sober people" that within less than twenty miles of Badminton "there were many more than twenty thousand up, and the rabble extreme rude," not only threatening the duchess, but "most that were in commission." Luckily the

* *i.e.* the Irish.

alarm subsided. News came from a reliable person that Salisbury and the other towns were not on fire, after all; and this being proclaimed throughout the country-side, the different troops that had been hurriedly raised were quietly dismissed, "and the country-people promised to go home to their houses and settle to work."

This is the last scene of interest in which we find the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort taking part. He died in 1699, and was succeeded by his grandson, while she survived to extreme old age, dying in 1715.

* * *

For the best picture of fashionable life under Charles II. and his successors we must turn to another calendar of the Rutland papers, and make a selection from the letters addressed to John, Lord Roos, afterwards Earl and Duke of Rutland, and to his wife, Katherine Noel, by different correspondents. Three sons of the Countess Elizabeth whom we already know became in turn Earl of Rutland. On the death of the last he was succeeded by his cousin, John Manners, great-grandson of Thomas, the first earl. He was of a peaceable and retiring disposition, living on his estates, and not concerning himself with public affairs. His married daughter, Grace, Lady Chaworth, was of a different nature, going here, there, and everywhere in the gay world, and sending full accounts of all that she saw and heard to her brother, Lord Roos.

Lord Roos was even more averse to society than his father. In horse-racing, gardening, and other country pastimes he was keenly interested; but even the wish of the sovereign and his own duty as a member of the House of Lords were insufficient to draw him to town. "Jack will never do either himself or family good," was his mother's verdict on him. His domestic troubles may have induced these unsociable ways. His first wife was Lady Anne Pierrepoint, whom he was obliged to divorce in 1668. A letter from a certain Mr. Alsopp to the Countess of Rutland shows the manner in which a divorce Bill was then taken through Parliament: "On Wednesday last, with the approbation of Mr. Attorney and Mr. George Montagu, I got six and forty of the House of Commons to the Dog Tavern in the Palace yard at Westminster, and gave them a dinner, where was present Mr. Attorney and Mr. George Montagu; my Lord Roos was taken with a fit of the colic, and was forced to run away after dinner, and as soon as they had dined, we carried them all to the House of Commons, and they passed the bill, as the Committee, without any amendment, and ordered it to be reported the next day."

The second Lady Roos, Lady Diana Bruce, died after a year of married life in 1672. A letter from Lady Chaworth, written soon after her brother's third marriage, which took place in less than a year, says naïvely, "I thought to have sent your

Lordship your last lady's picture from Mr. Lely's * this week." One is reminded of Lord Sheffield calling upon his sister, the settlements of his third wife in one pocket, the likeness of his second in the other.

Lady Chaworth's own wedded life was not entirely serene. In the early days of her marriage no less a person than Doctor Jeremy Taylor reported upon her condition to her mother, and bore witness that "she really believes herself a very happy person, and is confident it will every day increase. And therefore," continues Doctor Taylor, with the sound sense and knowledge of human nature of many of our old divines, "I humbly conceive that if ever you have noted or heard of any overtures of unkindness between them, your honour will think it fit to take no notice of it; for nothing is so great a security to love as never to remember any unkindness; but when things are well to suppose them that they were ever so; and though they are better now, and still grow better every day, yet they were never ill, unless any accident or violence of chance might casually intervene. Madam, we all know that you are wise and a great lover of your children's happiness, and in this particular your Ladyship can never better consult to the comfort of your excellent daughter, than by being

* Mr. Lely was often employed to paint portraits of the Manners family, but Lady Chaworth complains that he made "all men, blacker, older, and moroser than they are."

curious to avoid any mention of any unkindness that ever could have been supposed to have been offered to her."

Jeremy Taylor's good advice may have been taken by Lady Rutland, but it availed little with Lady Chaworth, whose differences with her husband increased as time passed. Among the Belvoir papers is a copy of a letter from Lord Chaworth to a certain Mr. Brook which suggests a stormy scene:

"I do hear from good hands that you should report that I should speak very ill-favoured things to you at London concerning my wife—which I do and will maintain is a damned lie. If you said any such thing I would advise you to eat your words immediately, else—by the living God, I'll cram them down your throat with my sword, and that very shortly. If you love yourself, set your hand to this enclosed, else take what follows.

"So I remain. To serve you.

"CHAWORTH."

Two years later Lady Chaworth left her husband, and took refuge at Lord Roos's house in Great Queen Street. The families on both sides did their best to bring the couple to an agreement, and Lord Chaworth wrote in very proper terms to his wife, asking her to come back to him, and promising her a fit reception. For some time Lady Chaworth deigned no answer; and when she did send one,

her husband did not approve of it. He forwarded it to her mother with the comment, "I do not take this enclosed to be an answer to my expectation—for the thing is—whether she will come, or she will not."

How matters were settled in the end does not appear; but Lady Chaworth's sorrows, far from making her a recluse, only flung her more deeply into the midst of Society and its pleasures. She was devotedly fond of Lord Roos and his children, and took a keen interest in the state of his health and the state of his garden. He was somewhat melancholic, and she sends him *Hudibras* and "valued Cyprus wine" as a cordial, while he returned the civility with venison, oat-cakes, and "the best brawn and fattest rabbits." Nearly every letter from her mentions some plants or seeds that she is procuring for him—melon-seed, orange-trees, lemon-trees, pomegranates, jessamine, red tuberoses, and Guernsey lilies.

As indefatigable a correspondent as Lady Chaworth was Lady Mary Bertie, aunt to Lord Roos's third wife, Katherine Noel, who wrote continually to her niece, with whom she was on the most affectionate terms.

The fashions of course were the most interesting subject for country readers, and the great ball given every year on the queen's birthday was the chief occasion on which they might be studied. In 1670 Lady Mary tells her niece that most ladies are wearing embroidered bodices with plain black skirts

of morella, mohair, or prunella, with a rich under-petticoat trimmed with two or three kinds of lace, the ordinary cost of which is fifty or sixty pounds.

Scented bodices were a refinement of fashion very necessary at a time when personal cleanliness was little practised, but the wearing of them sometimes led to awkward consequences. A certain Mrs. Lee who came to dance country dances with Lady Mary was taken so ill as the result of wearing "a pair of perfumed bodices" that Lady Mary was forced then and there to put her to bed in her own bed. "She would fain have lain with me all night, but her grandmother sent a chair for her, and would have her home, but she hath not been very well ever since."

Much feminine jealousy was provoked on one of the queen's birthdays by the rich array of a certain Miss Frazer, who spent £300 on her dress. Her rank, as daughter of one of the queen's physicians, did not warrant such an outlay, and her robes of "ermine upon velvet embroidered with gold and lined with cloth of gold" must have made dancing an impossibility. It was some satisfaction to the other ladies that her admirer, Sir Carr Scrope, took fright at her extravagance, and declared that he could not marry her, as his estate would hardly pay for her clothes. Lord Worcester in one of his letters to his wife confesses that he had been unable to present himself at Court for one of the celebrations of the queen's birthday, not considering the time

suited for dancing (it was just after the great fire), and having no clothes grand enough for the occasion, as he heard that "no one was to be smiled on by the Queen" who did not appear in splendid apparel.

The queen's name seldom appears in any of the letters, and it is evident that she was a person of no importance in her husband's Court. When she first arrived in England, and was a new toy for the *blasé* king, there are occasional praises of her sweetness and *naïveté*, and hopeful auguries are drawn from Charles's attentiveness to her—auguries which were never to be fulfilled. The prettiest description of her as she was in the first weeks of her marriage, before neglect and insult had broken her spirit and faded her comeliness, is in a letter from Edward Moore, a North Country gentleman, to his wife, Dorothy Fenwick:

"I have seen the young Queen who is the very picture of modesty, and indeed the pattern of all good wives, for it is crediable [sic] reported she is the most obedient to the King that ever was, and will not do anything in the least which may but seem to displease His Majesty. I could wish, as all the wives of England are ready to imitate her in attire, they might be obliged to follow her in her virtues and obedience to her husband. By no means she can be persuaded to look in a glass (she both hates patching and painting so much); in a word, if she hold on, there never came such a lady to England. Every morning by

seven of the clock she goes to her devotions in her study, privately, where she stays one hour and a half, then at nine of the clock goes to the chapel where she hears mass, and afterwards spends the day much in being alone, and if crowd of company will permit, then in devotion."

The "crowd of company" would not often permit the queen to be alone; in her time Royalty slept, dressed, ate, drank, undressed, sickened, was born, and died surrounded by a throng of sightseers. A few years later, when Catherine had been at death's door with a fever, she was obliged to receive an ambassador from the King of France, who delivered condolences on her illness as she lay in bed, although she was still so deaf that it was difficult to make her hear a word, and was still subject to fits of delirium. Mr. Moore concludes his portrait of the queen in these words: "She eats but very little, especially flesh meat. It is generally believed the King loves her very passionately."

Soon after her arrival came the struggle between Lady Castlemaine and herself, which ended, as might have been expected, in the total discomfiture of the innocent young woman by the insolent favourite. Most of Lord Rutland's correspondents notice her as little as did her husband's courtiers. Lady Campden, writing to her daughter, Lady Roos, once takes occasion to mention that the queen is much displeased with her treasurer, Lord Clarendon, who has never vouchsafed to give her a statement of

accounts during the whole of his term of office, and has taken notice of it "to my Lady Clarendon, publicly, at Court, which put her to the blush." Such a proceeding showed great want of taste on the part of the queen, but the provocation was extreme. The irregularity with which her income as queen-consort was paid obliged her to use many economies, which earned for her the reputation of meanness; but that she could be both generous and kind is proved by a story told of her in one of Lady Chaworth's letters:

"The Queen did a great act of charity on Sunday morning, going to Somerset House to her devotions. They saw a man drowning, and she made her boat make up to rescue him, which they had the luck to do, but took him in appearance dead into her boat till they got another to remove him into. After some hours he came to life, and the next day went to give Her Majesty thanks, who was pleased both to see him and give him five guineas, [he] being some poor tradesman."

The same authority gives us a glimpse of one of Catherine's few happy days during a bright September when the Court was at Windsor:

"All the Queen's servants treated her by every one's bringing their dish, who then attended her into the forest, and she ate under a tree. Lady Bath's dish was a chine of beef, Mrs. Windham's, a venison pasty; but Mr. Hall brought two dozen of ruffs and reeves and delicate baskets of fruit, Mr. Chiffinch

for his daughter's behalf twelve dozen of choice wine. The Queen wonderfully pleased and merry, and none but herself and servants."

Dancing was the favourite amusement of the queen, in spite of her awkward figure, and the Court was always at work rehearsing ballets. One performed by the queen, the Duchesses of Buckingham, Richmond, and Monmouth, Mrs. Berkeley, and "Madame Kerrwell, the French Maid of Honour," was so thickly attended by spectators that Lady Mary Bertie was forced to go to the "great Hall," where it was to be danced, at four o'clock, although it did not begin till nine or ten.

Fencing was an amusement practised by some of the ladies. The Duchesse Mazarin and the Countess of Sussex, having taken lessons, went down into St. James's Park with swords under their "nightgowns" (evening dresses), and exchanged several passes, "to the admiration of several men that was lookers on." Any exercise that kept them warm must have been grateful, for this was in the December of 1676, when the snow and frost were terrible, and the king drove all over "his fine canals of St. James's" in a sledge, "after the Muscovite fashion," and the newly married Duchess of York pelted her elderly husband with snowballs, and took refuge from him in her closet.

Lady Sussex's name appears frequently in the letters, generally in connection with that of Madame Mazarin. It was a singular friendship. Madame

Mazarin at more than thirty years of age still retained the marvellous beauty that had taken captive the heart of Charles II. when he was only a king without a kingdom and she was Hortense Mancini, the loveliest of the nieces of the Cardinal who ruled France. Finding it impossible to live with her husband, who was more than half mad, she fled from his home, and after many wanderings came to the Court of her old lover.

Charles, careless and good-natured as he was, never forgot a slight put upon him in the time of his distresses, and still remembered that his proposals for Hortense had twice been rejected by her uncle; but he was well pleased to give her a refuge from a miserable existence, especially as her arrival in England delivered him from his tyrant, the Duchess of Cleveland, who, in a paroxysm of jealousy, packed up her goods and betook herself to France. Lady Sussex, the daughter of Charles II. and the Duchess of Cleveland, was a merry little romp and a great favourite with her royal father, who was often to be found amusing himself in her rooms. Madame Mazarin made a pet and plaything of the light-hearted girl, and the two were almost inseparable. Lady Chaworth saw them standing on a balcony in Cheapside with the Prince of Monaco, and the "Portingall" ambassador, looking at the fireworks which were being let off in the crowd below to celebrate Lord Mayor's day. Lady Chaworth had the good-fortune to escape unhurt, but the balcony

was the target for many squibs, one of which, lighting on Lady Sussex's forehead, "forced her to put on a huge patch."

Lord Sussex did not approve of his wife's intimacy with the duchesse, and presently announced that Lady Sussex and he must part for ever unless she would be content to say good-bye to the Court and live quietly with him in the country. To one who had been reared at Whitehall this was the most terrible fate that could be imagined. "You little beast," the Duke of Buckingham was heard to say to a dog that ran between his legs, "I wish you was married and lived in the country!" An opportune illness delayed the fulfilment of the threat, but all too soon "Lord Sussex is well again and continues peremptory to take his wife out of town, and she is to conclude dancing with the ball to-night at the duchess's,* and goes out of town, they say, to-morrow, or the next day." Luckily the cold weather made travelling impossible, and gave Lady Sussex another respite, which she improved by taking fencing-lessons, as we have seen, with Madame Mazarin. A few weeks later she is in the country with her husband, and with the happy disposition of childhood is "mightily pleased with fox-hunting and hare-hunting," although she still kisses Madame Mazarin's picture "with much affection."

It was a disorderly and riotous Court, and Lord

* Maria Beatrice d'Este, Duchess of York

Sussex was not to be blamed for wishing to withdraw his child-wife from it. The following story sent to Lord Roos about a fortnight after Lady Sussex's departure is almost incredible: "His Majesty, whom God preserve, went on Monday last to Windsor to see his workmen, and with a design to stay all the week there, but on Wednesday night some of his courtiers fell to their cups and drank away all reason, at last they began to despise art too, and brake into Prince Rupert's laboratory, and dashed his stills and other chemical instruments in pieces. His Majesty went to bed about twelve o'clock, but about two or three o'clock one of Henry Killigrew's men was stabbed in the company in the next chamber to the King. They say he murdered himself amongst them because of some distaste betwixt his master and him; how it was, God knows; but the Duke ran speedily to His Majesty's bed, and drew the curtain, and said, 'Sir, will you lie in bed till you have your throat cut?' whereupon His Majesty got up at three o'clock in the night and came immediately away to Whitehall." The Killigrews were always in well-merited disgrace for some piece of audacity, but their pranks were not always of a character to bear repetition.

Where the courtiers allowed themselves so much freedom the lower classes could not be expected to have any high standard, and crime of every sort was prevalent, in spite of the severity of the laws.

Robberies were frequent and audacious. One day the Duke of York's closet was found broken open; the chest and cabinet in it had also been forced and all his papers taken, although his money, watches, and plate were left untouched. Popular report said that his duchess (Anne Hyde) had done it in her search for love-letters, but Lady Chaworth considered that she was too sensible to commit such an act of violence, and also too ill, "being at this time broken out in several places of her face and body." At another time thieves broke through a window of the Lord Chancellor's house in Queen Street, and stole the mace and the two purses. There are frequent allusions in these letters to Blood's audacious attempt upon the Crown jewels.

It was not safe for any one to traverse the streets unarmed after nightfall. The few watchmen, who were supposed to guard against fire, thieves, and other dangers of the night, knew better than to see or hear anything unusual. One of Lady [illegible] Bertie's letters alludes to a wretch[illegible] who was murdered while on du[illegible] Monmouth and some dru[illegible] that the culprits [illegible] the end [illegible] postpo[illegible] place [illegible] fifty [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible]

the death of several victims. One of them attacked a maidservant, who resisted lustily, and called for help until a constable came to the rescue. The ruffian proved to be a Holborn haberdasher; "he was just upon marrying one with £600," writes Lady Mary Bertie, "but she will not now have him."

The scandals of the day are generally retailed or mentioned in the letters from Lady Chaworth and Lady Mary. Most of them are unfit for publication, and would scarcely be repeated by a modern sister to her brother, or even by an aunt to her married niece; but here and there we come upon an amusing illustration of the difference between the manners of high society under the later Stuarts and under our own Sovereign. Lady Chaworth tells her brother: "The quarrels of some ladies hath made great talk in the town and much laughing. Mistress Baker first began with a bitter letter to my Lady Anglesey, yet concluded 'a lover of her soul.' This highly incensed the lady, and Mistress Baker not forbearing the house upon it, she threw some things at her to have her go out of the room.*

"T[illegible]her two ladies is Lady Mohun and Mistress B[illegible] dear friends, but it is too long for any l[illegible] in short they were at cards at one [illegible]erts's lodgings, and one Mistress Love [illegible]dy of the house, Lady Mohun's page

* [illegible]glesey's diary records that his wife fell into "a [illegible]ng humour" with him over a pair of "pantaloons" [illegible] her son.

spit in that Mistress Love's daughter's face, and so the mother would have turned him out of the house, but he ran up to his lady, and so the woman followed him, and the quarrel began between her and the lady with ill words and candlesticks. And so the lady petitioned the House upon breach of privilege, and her father brought it in, but Mistress Brown, Mistress Roberts, and her husband, came in against Lady Mohun, and made her the provoker, so the House of Lords threw it out, and left them to the law, and she says they have foresworn themselves in favour of the woman, and they say not. And it entertained the King mightily who was at the House."

Well might Charles swear that the debates in the House were as good as a play. A candlestick seems to have been a common weapon in a domestic brawl. There is a letter written by Lady Standish to Mr. Roger Kenyon, M.P., a few years later, which complains that "Lord Willoughby is almost as great a plague to me as he is to his wife and her maids, for my Lord fighting with my Lady's woman, she has broke his shins with a brass candlestick, and he is a cripple."

Blows were not infrequent, even with the very highest in the land, when the provocation was severe. Peregrine Bertie, vice-chamberlain of the household, writes to his cousin, Lady Rutland, in 1686: "Last night it was very confidently reported that the Queen and my Lady Peterborough were fallen

out, and that the Queen had given her a box of the ear."

Duels were of common occurrence, and elopements were continually taking place. One lady "went out as to a play," and took that opportunity of escaping to a house "where the minister, the ring, and the confidants" were ready, after which she had the presence of mind to write to the Bishop of London and beg him to make her excuses to her father. The injured parent "sent a thundering command for her to come home that night," which she meekly obeyed. Apparently she had been married before, for mention is made of her daughter and her property, and her second husband was younger than herself. The end of the story is not uncommon, although sad. Eight months later we are told: "She has quickly left her young esquire a widower; and 'tis said he is more concerned for her death than he seemed to be for her life, which will make some believe he regrets the loss of the estate, for 'tis certain her daughter never cried, though 'tis also reported they took what care possible by forcing her [the mother] to levy a fine just as she was dying." Another heroine made an assignation in a church with a lover whose visits her family did not permit her to receive; she kept her appointment, but, "making some pretence to go to the door, she locked him in all night."

Perhaps it is not wonderful that the Morocco ambassador conceived a horror of the manners of

the English ladies. He was one of the lions of a season, dividing public attention with the Russian ambassador, who made his entry into London in November, 1681, "with a lamentable attendance of lousy fellows." The Tsar's envoy came to announce the marriage of Feodor III. with a lady who had died two years before he arrived in England. The long beards worn by him and all his retinue made a great impression on the smooth-chinned English, who had been accustomed to regard General Dalziell as a monster. The only one with a short beard was the ambassador's son, who had been shaved in France while he was unconscious after a drinking-bout, and expected to lose his head as a penalty on his return home. A Russian skull is still said to be able to bear anything in the way of strong drink, so the French must have found it difficult to intoxicate their guest; the ambassador himself thought nothing of a pint of brandy with a spoonful of white pepper at one draught. When in private he sat in his nightgown, all his fine garments being borrowed from the Tsar's wardrobe for the occasion, under pain of severe punishment if they were lost or spoiled. King Charles made him an allowance of £10 a day during his visit, with which, as it was paid in new money, the barbarian was delighted, and he starved his household in order to keep it to himself. Lady Anne Howe, who wrote all these particulars to Lady Rutland, was very anxious to obtain a sight of him before his potations

had killed him: "I have seen but one play since I came [to town], but I must go to see him; sure he cannot live long."

* * *

Frequent mention is made in the letters addressed to Lady Rutland by the different members of her family, of her sister and correspondent, Bridget Noel. One is apt to imagine that unmarried daughters in those days were "sair hadden doun"; and that even the married ones did not escape lightly is shown by the private diary of the Earl of Anglesey (husband of the lady who gave Mistress Baker such strong hints to discontinue her visits). He was a gentleman of grave deportment, who served Charles II. faithfully in various high offices; and he records prayers, meditations, and constant attendances at church, with such pious aspirations as "God's providence be magnified," "The Lord sanctify the rest of my days to His glory," and so forth. Nevertheless, in the course of a disagreement with his daughter, Lady Mohun, he called her "impudent baggage," and made use of other terms with which it is to be supposed his Biblical studies had made him acquainted, and concludes his account of the quarrel, "if she had not been married I had beat her," which looks as if a wife were privileged to receive correction only from her husband.

Bridget Noel's parents were of a gentler nature, and the record of her amusements and occupations

could hardly be equalled by the most emancipated young woman who flourishes her latchkey in the face of the public. Card-playing was the fashionable diversion in the later years of Charles II.'s reign, quite superseding the dancing in which his queen had delighted. "I never knew so undancing a winter as this," grumbles Mr. Edward Bedingfield to Lady Rutland on New Year's Day, 1685. "Play is grown the predominate passion even of the ladies [who] as well as men prefer it to all diversions. *Comette* now reigns, though *Bassett* still keeps in credit." Bridget played with her friends at basset, ombre, gleek, "whisk," and sometimes hazarded a few casts at dice. From a postscript to one of her letters it appears that she was furnished with money for gambling by Lady Rutland, who paid her losses and pocketed her winnings. Lady Rutland must have found this expensive, as Bridget once confesses, "The last time . . . we lost £40." She betted freely, wagering ten guineas at a time with "my Lady Exeter." In horse-racing she took a keen interest, and was quite proud of a report that she had lost £1,000 on "the mare's match." Whether Lady Rutland were as pleased (if the rumour ever reached Belvoir) is nowhere stated.

So far Bridget's tastes were only those of an advanced young lady of the twentieth century; but it is to be hoped that one of her favourite pastimes would be revolting to modern womanhood. We find her writing to apologise for postponing

a visit to Belvoir, as she is engaged to attend "a great cocking" (cock-fight), which is to be "as great a match as ever has been." A certain "Barney" has promised "to back our cocks with some thousands, for he is of our side."

When gambling and races began to pall upon her, Bridget Noel found a new excitement in speculation. She became part owner, with Lady Rutland, of a "grove" (*i.e.* pit), and sat pensive among a roomful of company, thinking of her "grove" instead of playing cards. A sensible friend writes drily to her sister, "I wish your Ladyship and Lady Bridget good event in your grove; I fancy two such miners are not common in Derbyshire." Among her friends Bridget was frequently accorded a courtesy title; but the earldom which her father and mother were always expecting, and for which Lord Campden was so foolish as to pay £4,000, contrary to his wife's advice, was not bestowed until her brother had succeeded to the property.

She was evidently as much interested in dress as Lady Rutland's other correspondents, and her letters give minute details of purchases made at the London shops. After buying "a black manto" of a waved silk, black velvet bodice and black petticoat with black fringes, it was somewhat annoying to find that coloured petticoats were the right thing to wear. Petticoats seem to have caused much anxiety at that time. Bridget's friends in the country wrote to ask how they should be

made, and she was unable to satisfy them. "I cannot give you an account, for I am told the lace is not used, and indeed I have not seen any petticoats but what has been ermine, and made up just like your own ermine petticoat." Fringes were *de rigueur*, some petticoats having as many as nine rows of fringe set "not straight but in waves," which in Bridget's opinion did not look well. When not describing her own costumes, she is ready to offer criticisms on those worn by "my sister Gainsborough," whose taste in dress left much to be desired. Writing to Lady Rutland on a Saturday after a visit to Exton, Bridget says, "To-morrow is Sunday, and I intend to go to church, so that I have not much time to send you word of any fashions," but she manages to find leisure to report that "my sister Gainsborough was in her frightful red manto and petticoat, and all the rest of the ladies very fine." A few days later she goes to see Lady Exeter at Burleigh, and again encounters her sister "in such a dress as I never saw, without dispute. Her jengan [?] manto is the worst of the kind, it is purple, and a great deal of green, and a little gold, and great flowers; there is some red with the green, and no lining, which looks most abominable."

Bridget was a constant attendant at the theatre whenever she had an opportunity. While she was the guest of Sir Thomas and Lady Fanshaw at Jenkins, in Essex, she frequently drove up to town to visit the shops and see a play, returning the same

night. The roads from Jenkins to London were very good, and she did not meet with such ill adventures as befell the Duchess of York (Maria Beatrice) in driving back from "Lord Buckingham's near Windsor," when the servants were so drunk that they overturned the coach with her royal highness, injuring her nose and the faces of the two ladies in attendance upon her.

One of Bridget's expeditions was to "the great fortune-teller, Madame La Croy." One would like to know how this lady professed to see into the future for her clients. Did she employ the common method of looking at the lines on the hand, or did she consult the magic crystal, which was then, as now, a favourite instrument with those who wished to tamper with occult powers? A curious letter preserved in another volume of the Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, and dated 1666, gives Mrs. Anne Savile's description of what she saw in a crystal ball. She speaks of "shapes of men and women," "a beauteous sky studded with stars and planets," and other things, but has the sense to quote against herself the proverb, "As the fool thinketh, so the bell ringeth." The chief impression left on the mind of Bridget Noel by her interview with the seer was one of pleasure, as Madame La Croy foretold that she would never have the small-pox.

After making these excursions three or four times a week, even Bridget's superabundant vitality was

exhausted, and she was forced to lie in bed all the next day. Her sister-in-law, Susanna Noel, who was also paying a visit at Jenkins, complained that for three nights in succession she had not been allowed three hours' sleep; and Uncle Charles Bertie, who kindly went down to call upon his nieces, was made to stay and play cards till eight o'clock in the morning, and returned to London "scarcely able to hold up his eyes." He evidently thought this dissipation carried too far, and gives vent to the wish that "we could prevail with Lady Bridget to hearken to any fair proposals of marriage. I cannot say," he adds, "I find any great inclination in her to change her condition upon equal terms."

The letters of the Verney family, now become a classic to rank with those of the Pastons, show how small a share was played by love in the marriages of the seventeenth century. If further proof were needed, the extremely cold-blooded letter of Sir Robert Harley, already quoted,* reflects the tone of the age. A marriage was a bargain between the relations on either side; the offers were taken into consideration with the same absence of sentiment that would have characterised the haggling over the sale of a horse or a cow, and the highest bidder generally carried off the prize. It is wonderful that these arranged marriages, in which, by open consent, only the lowest motives had any influence, turned out as well as they did, and that we have so many

* See Chapter II.

instances of faithful husbands and devoted wives living in perfect harmony with their families around them. The position must have been sufficiently difficult when both parties had reached years of discretion, and the child-marriages so fashionable under Charles II. could scarcely end otherwise than miserably.

There are frequent allusions by Lady Rutland's friends to the tragic story of *La Triste Heritière*, the heiress of the Percies, bought at ten years old by the Duke of Newcastle's son, Lord Ogle, widowed, and married again at thirteen to "Tom o' Ten Thousand"—Thomas Thynne, of Longleat, the richest commoner in England—from whom she fled with her grandmother to the Continent, until Count Königsmarck's hired bravoes once more widowed her.* Almost equally sad was the story of Anne Scott, the heiress of Buccleuch, the tiniest lady of Charles's Court, whom he gave to his worthless son, James, Duke of Monmouth. No one saw any harm in these marriages; even the pious Lord Anglesey noted in his diary with great satisfaction: "This morning about ten of the clock at Lambeth, the Archbishop of Canterbury married my grandson, John Power, not eight year old, to Mrs. Katherine Fitzgerald, his cousin-german, about

* She survived all her troubles to marry the "Proud Duke of Somerset," and by his own account never took the liberty of embracing him. Her carroty hair was celebrated by Swift in his *Windsor Prophecy*

thirteen years of age. I gave her in the chapel there, and they answered as well as those of greater age."

Where bridegroom and bride were past childhood and some attention was paid to disposition, education, and other matters, it is possible that they were at least as happy with a judiciously selected partner of their elders' choosing and full license to do their courting after marriage, as their descendants prove, whose hearts are "slowly stewed to rags over the flames of a consuming passion." But in mitigation of the domestic scandals which form such a prominent part of memoirs of the time, it must be remembered that in nine cases out of ten neither of the principals had been allowed much voice in settling the most important business of their lives.

Bridget Noel was for sale, like all her contemporaries, and her relations had much trouble and anxiety on her account. Her prospects were spoiled, in her mother's opinion, by the attentions of Mr. Chaloner Chute, of the Vyne, whose "hankering about her" was supposed to hinder "all good matches thinking of her." The report was general in London that he intended marrying her, to the great wrath of Lady Campden, whose kind friends took care to inform her of it. Mr. Chute kept up a correspondence with Lady Rutland, "and the fool brags of it," writes the indignant Lady Campden, "and nobody now thinks of Bridget."

It is not clear why Mr. Chute's attentions were not

approved by all his lady's family. According to Lady Campden, Bridget herself discouraged his suit, but it cannot be doubted that her individual preferences would have gone for nothing had her parents desired him as a son-in-law. Whether Lady Rutland favoured him does not appear. She once wrote to warn her mother that Mr. Chute was expected at Belvoir, where Bridget was her sister's guest; to which Lady Campden replied that it was unnecessary to take any special precautions to prevent the two from meeting. "My Lord does not suspect her, and leaves her to her own decision, and if she should keep up in her chamber my Lord thinks it would be worse; it would look as if one feared her for him—that we was afraid of her." A little later we find Mr. Chute writing in most affectionate terms to Lady Rutland from "the French camp at Leffenes." Perhaps he thought that military service might be the surest way of winning his lady's heart; but it was as unavailing as the long account of Monmouth's execution which he sent, ostensibly to amuse Lady Rutland, in the following year. Whether by her own determination or in obedience to her family, Bridget would have nothing to do with him.

The unfailing good-nature of Charles Bertie and his position at Court made him Lady Campden's chief ally in her pursuit of a husband for her daughter, and he entered upon the quest with hearty good will. His reports on the state of the matrimonial market are amusing to read. To Lady

Campden's grief, her daughters' portions could not be more than £10,000 apiece. There was at one time a hope of securing Lord Conway for Bridget, but Sir John Stowell interposed with an offer of his daughter's hand: Mistress Stowell was "engaged to be made worth thirty thousand pound," so "Bridget with her ten thousand pound will not be heard of," wrote the despairing mother to Charles Bertie. The uncle responded with a lamentation over the hardness of the times: "Husbands are very bad, and scarce any good ones, which troubles me extremely upon Lady Bridget's account. Ungrateful and vile age!"

Lady Campden consoled herself with the reflection that even heiresses could not have it all their own way, as "Lady Ogle's great fortune brought her to a great deal of ill fortune." Then Charles Bertie had a proposal to make: "What think you of my Lord Marquis of Worcester's son for my niece Bridget? All things are possible, if you can open your purse strings and have no exception to his shape, whose mind richly supplies all those defects."

Either the purse-strings could not be sufficiently loosened or the physical defects of the suitor were more than Lady Campden could excuse, for we hear no more of him until she reports to her husband that "My Lord Marquis Worcester's son is to marry Sir Jonathan Child's daughter, and twenty thousand pound." Lord Banbury is the next eligible suitor whose name is coupled by rumour with that of

Bridget, but it does not appear whether his suit had any existence save in the imagination of Northamptonshire gossips. Charles Bertie wrote that he wished his niece well married, but that "men look now to be courted as women used to formerly."

Poor Lady Campden was nearly at her wits' end. Besides Bridget, there was another daughter, "Pen," to be settled in life, and a son, Baptist, who generally figures in the correspondence as "Bab." At least his wayward affections gave her little trouble, as, when there was some question of his marriage, she wrote to Lady Rutland, "Bab will never break his heart with being in love." His future was more easily settled than that of his sisters, and when he found a wife his mother wrote triumphantly, "Now many are sorry Bab is engaged," though she was obliged to confess that "Few men here (in London), do think of marrying," and that she could not hear of any match for Bridget or Pen. One Sir George Dowing had offered his son for Pen, and made so sure of success as to call to arrange the matter with Peregrine Bertie, who, having heard nothing of it from the lady's family, gave him no satisfaction. The terms he proposed seemed quite inadequate to Lady Campden, who wrote to Lady Rutland, "None need to give him encouragement where ten thousand ready portion is."

So hard to be found were husbands that at this time three ladies scandalised Society by their marriages—Lady Katherine Vane to a page

attending on her sister; Lady Exeter, Sir John Churchill's daughter, to the Savoy ambassador's servant; and "Lady Newburgh" to her own steward.

While in the midst of her negotiations, Lady Campden died. She left £4,000 to each of her two unmarried daughters, of whom Bridget was one, and a larger sum to Lady Rutland. Thus left without a mother's help, Bridget's chance of getting a husband was considerably diminished, and there is a slightly acrid tone about her allusions to other marriageable ladies who were better dowered. "I am very sorry for poor Mistress Hatton's having the small-pox, but I hope she will escape with her life, and then it is no matter if her face is a little disfigured, being [sic] her father is able to make an addition to her portion." Mistress Hatton survived to marry Lord Nottingham, and her father was reported to be ready to give her £12,000, which, in Bridget's opinion, was a high price to pay for a bridegroom who had already a son and a daughter by his first wife. When it came to the point, it was found that her dowry was no more than £1,000, which must have been a trying discovery for poor Bridget.

One would fain know more of Bridget's story, but she drops out of the correspondence. There is a characteristic letter from her in the June of 1688 telling various items of gossip, and concluding with the information that she is having her likeness taken

by "the man that does the pictures in enamel." "I wish the man does not get this new distemper, and die before he comes again." After this there is no more from her, except a little note on business matters to her nephew's wife, Lady Roos, dated 1702. The editorial preface to the second volume of the Belvoir MSS. tells us coldly that Bridget Noel remained unmarried to the end of her life. Her name disappears from the letters of her family after the accession of William and Mary, and we do not know how she spent her time. There is a curious passage in a letter written in 1692 by Lady Margaret Russell to her niece Katherine Russell (daughter of Rachel, Lady Russell), who became the wife of young Lord Roos in the following year. "I was yesterday to see Lady Katherine Leveson" (the Earl of Rutland's daughter, just married to Sir John Leveson) "in compliment to you; who is a pretty woman, but a little too like her aunt Bridget." Was it of Bridget's face or of her character that Lady Margaret disapproved?

Lady Chaworth makes her last appearance receiving a visit from Lady Russell and "my dear Lord Roos, his mistress," and writing to tell her brother how fortunate he seemed to be in his future daughter-in-law.

Charles and Peregrine Bertie continued to take the same affectionate interest in all connected with Lady Rutland's family as long as they were alive. Peregrine lived to see Lord Rutland created a

duke (an honour which the earl owed in great measure to the solicitations on his behalf of that most importunate widow, Lady Russell), and survived him less than six months. "The poor Vice," writes John Charlton in July, 1711, "who was as well as ever playing at White's at ten o'clock last Monday night, fell into an apoplexy, never spoke one word, but lived till seven the next evening."

Many of the letters written to Lord and Lady Rutland during the reigns of William and Mary and Anne are fully as interesting as those which have been already quoted. But it is scarcely possible to include them within this selection. They introduce a new set of characters—new friends and new connections at Belvoir, and entirely different scenes and personages at Whitehall. When the orange usurped the place where the white rose should have bloomed, a change came over all things, not so dire as that which was wrought when the wind blew "a wee German lairdie" from his beloved Hanover to rule one of the greatest nations in Europe, but still sufficiently marked almost to constitute a new epoch.

V.

AN ILL-MATCHED COUPLE.

THOMAS PITT
(*d.* 1726).

JANE INNES (MRS. PITT)
(*d.* 1727).

V.

AN ILL-MATCHED COUPLE.

A CLOSE study of the history of any family generally enables us to place it in one of three classes. In the first division are the few who, owing to fortunate circumstances and exceptionally sweet dispositions, quarrel neither with the world nor among themselves; in the second, those who, quarrelling among themselves, manage to keep on good terms with their acquaintance; and in the third, those whose relations with outsiders or with each other are accompanied by an incessant jangle of dispute and invective. To the last belonged the family which has given to England two of her greatest statesmen. Gifted in their various ways as were nearly all who bore the name of Pitt, they seem to have been as quarrelsome and turbulent as can well be imagined. Much of their ill-temper was doubtless caused by the hereditary gout from which all suffered, and which, so far as can be traced, was a legacy from the first member of the family who comes prominently before our notice, Thomas Pitt, Governor of Fort St. George, in Madras, for the East India Company.

His picture still hangs at Chevening, and shows a corpulent elderly gentleman in a curled wig, embroidered waistcoat, and long coat reaching halfway down to his heels. The lines about mouth and brow indicate an irascible and violent temper, and the lower part of the face is heavy and fleshy; but there is a great suggestion of intellectual power in the massive forehead, and much shrewdness and penetration in the gaze of those keen eyes under their heavy eyebrows. Hot-tempered, overbearing, but not unworthy of love or respect—so he seems from his likeness and by the letters written by him in a bold large hand, with a fine indifference to correct spelling and the proper uses of capital letters.

In the same place is the portrait of his wife, Jane, daughter of James Innes, of Reid Hall, Moray. Sitting beside a table, holding a flower in one hand, her hair dishevelled and flowing over her shoulders, her appearance is not attractive. She looks as if she had been too much bored to complete her toilette, and the somewhat coarsely moulded nose and lips seem to show ill-temper and discontent. If she were not in the best humour with her surroundings it would not be wonderful, seeing how uncomfortable was her married life. Undoubtedly there were faults on both sides; if she was peevish and neglectful, the governor was unreasonable and violent. In common justice, one is bound to find what excuses there may be for her, as her letters

have not been preserved, and she has no opportunity of speaking in her own defence. The governor is always ready to air his grievances to his correspondents, and, as every one of his kin and acquaintance—wife, sons, daughters, cousins, official superiors, servants, clergy, and Members of Parliament—come in by turn for a share of his vituperations, it is only fair to conclude that Mrs. Pitt cannot always have been as much to blame as her husband imagined.

Thomas Pitt and Jane Innes were married in 1678. He was the second son of the Reverend John Pitt, Rector of Blandford St. Mary, Dorset, and is said to have been "bred to the sea"—of which last fact the style and diction of some of his letters would almost be proof in itself. His early career was at one time a mystery, but the investigations of Colonel Sir Henry Yule have shown that the despotic Governor of Fort St. George was identical with "Pyrott Pitts," "an interloper in the Bay," "a fellow of a haughty, ruffling, daring temper," who successfully engaged in contraband trade and defied the East India Company in the latter years of the seventeenth century.

The Company had an exclusive right to trade in Madras, and warned off all other adventurers who dared to enter the bay. But Pirate Pitt, in his little vessel the *Crown*, could make the run in less time than any of their ships, and as his goods were newer and fresher, he drove a thriving trade.

He had various partners in his illicit business, one of them being his cousin, John Pitt, of whom more will have to be said by-and-by. The Company raged, threatened, abused, and all in vain. In one of his expeditions he was actually made prisoner by their officials, and released only on giving a security of £40,000; but, once set free, he returned to his former courses. At last, in 1684, the East India Company's Court in England brought an action against him, which was decided in their favour by Judge Jeffries. Pitt was condemned to pay a fine of £1,000, and it may have been supposed that he would turn his mind to some other way of making a fortune.

A few years later we find that Pitt, with £600 of his fine remitted, is admitted to the freedom of the Company, and on the strength of this is once again "interloping" in the bay. Recognising the hopelessness of the situation, the Company condescended to make terms with him, and with rare wisdom decided to use his shrewdness and enterprise for their own advantage. In 1698 the Court in London are writing a letter to the Council at Fort St. George concerning "the defeating of Interlopers, wherein we think our President's advice may be helpful to you, he having engaged to Us to signalize himself therein." In accordance with the maxim "Set a thief to catch a thief," Pirate Pitt had been made President of Fort St. George.

The story is extraordinary, but Sir Henry Yule

has established it beyond the possibility of disbelief. The Company were justified in their choice, for most of their subsequent prosperity was due to the action of the new governor.

Pitt had already made his own fortune, or a considerable part of it, in the privateering ventures which he now abandoned, and had been able to buy the manor of Stratford-under-the-Castle, in Wiltshire (Old Sarum), where he left his wife and children when he returned to India. He had sat in Parliament as Member for Salisbury, and then as Member for Old Sarum. A landed proprietor and an M.P. was a very different thing from the obscure adventurer who had been arrested by order of the council; and the new president, who had a sense of humour, must have chuckled to himself over the change in his position when he took his seat at the head of the Board for the first time. Whether he exulted aloud over his colleagues is not stated, but we are told that his first proceeding was to give a treat to the servants and freemen of the Company in honour of his accession.

By a curious fate, Pitt's cousin and old ally, John Pitt, was now at Masulipatam in the service of the New East India Company, generally known as the "English" Company, founded under a charter of William III. in 1690. Between the servants of the Old Company and the servants of the New there could be nothing but strife, more especially as the officers of the New Company had obtained the right

to call themselves British consuls. No one in Madras, according to the Old Company, paid much heed to them or to their authority; but the additional importance thus given to a set of upstarts was galling to Pitt and the members of his council. John Pitt at first wrote frequently to his cousin in a strain of polite cordiality which had no effect upon the governor, whose replies to these "sugar-candy letters," as he calls them, do not err on the side of sweetness. Finding his advances discouraged, and annoyed by the continual friction between the agents of the rival companies, John Pitt now changed his tone and tried to emulate the governor's diction. At this the Governor and Council of Fort St. George conceived themselves mortally affronted, and they wrote to complain of receiving from the consul "a letter wherein were sundry expressions as if it had been dictated to him by the oyster wenches at Billingsgate." After incessant disputes to the injury of both sides, the companies were united under a common board of managers in 1702; but the quarrels between the members continued as heartily as ever, and were the ultimate cause of Pitt's retirement some years later.

The lives of the early settlers in India, cut off almost entirely from English influences, were in many respects a grotesque yet pathetic imitation of the lives that their friends were leading at home. One often hears the complaint that the frequency of communication between England and India has

in reality set the two countries farther apart, instead of drawing them closer together, and that Englishmen in India now understand the natives far less than did those of former generations, who, being practically exiled for life, adapted themselves to circumstances—circumstances frequently including an Indian wife. But the early history of Fort St. George tells another story—of Englishmen clinging with a tenacity that was almost ludicrous to the customs of their native land, however little suited these might be to a tropical climate. Every Sunday, after meeting together, the governor and his council went to attend divine service at St. Mary's Church in the fort, just as the mayor and corporation of some small provincial town in England might have gone to their parish church. St. Mary's was managed by a vestry, which elected churchwardens and sidesmen, administered charity funds, lent money, and yearly listened to a repetition of the Church of England catechism from the children educated in the school for Eurasians, who were subsequently apprenticed to various trades—still under the superintendence of the vestry.

A strict discipline was maintained over the dwellers in the fort, who were bound to be in their houses by a certain hour at night, and were heavily fined for "swearing, lying, quarrelling," for giving dinner-parties on Sunday, and for omitting to attend church. To judge from the records left to us, all the English in Fort St. George were in a

continual state of bickering and dispute on any and every pretext, so that if the statute against quarrelling were not a dead letter, the fines must have amounted to a considerable sum. The Indian climate is said not to be improving to the temper even in these days of hygiene, and the Company's servants must have suffered more from it than their representatives of the present day. Quinine was then a newly discovered drug, administered to kings and exalted personages with much caution, but not in common use. The exiles at Fort St. George fared every day as was the custom in England, and washed down an excessive quantity of heavy and stimulating food with copious draughts of the liquors provided by the Company for their servants—strong beer and the coarse, fruity Shiraz wine made by the Armenians of Persia. Governor Pitt, heedless of his gout and other maladies, was eager to receive presents of bottled cider from his friends in England, in return for the jars of mangoes or of fine rice and the casks of arrack which he sent home by convenient "opportunities." It is not wonderful that there were so many graves in the cemetery at the fort, or that a retired Anglo-Indian in the old-fashioned comedies is always represented with the temper of a fiend and the complexion of a guinea.

At first Pitt's temper, always irascible, seems to have vented itself chiefly upon those with whom he was brought in contact in the way of business. He lived for the most part in the Company's garden

houses, the one a palace by the mudbanks of the evil-smelling river Cooum, the other near St. Thomas's Mount, now know as Guindy. Here he could amuse himself with gardening, of which he was passionately fond. The care of his gardens, trees, and plantations at home was at least as important to him as the care of his family, and his letters reiterate inquiries after his "young trees" and "nurseries." Like many others, he was anxious to make English plants grow in a foreign soil, and he demanded seeds from home, which do not seem to have thriven. Those who have seen the forlorn parodies of English gardens which some exiles still try to maintain amid all the luxuriance of tropical vegetation, will be able to conjure up a picture of the governor, having returned from one of his regal progresses abroad with state umbrella-bearer, trumpeters, and armed body-guard, assuming a comfortable *déshabillé*, and moving up and down among the scentless stunted blossoms which were his chief reminder of the grey skies and bleak winds of the Wiltshire downs where lay his home.

In the meanwhile Mrs. Pitt was at Stratford with the younger children, the eldest son, Robert, having accompanied his father to Madras. All business was left in her hands, and to a woman already burdened with the care of a large family this must have been a heavy charge. Not only had she to manage the estate, the plantations, the children's education, and other such matters, but she was

expected to act as her husband's agent in his private trade. He was continually remitting various articles of merchandise—such as rice, quicksilver, tea, "dragon's blood," nutmegs, arrack, mangoes, which he required her to sell at a considerable profit, and whenever a suitable opportunity occurred she was ordered to send him out English goods for which he could find a market in the bay. It was the system by which he had laid the foundations of his prosperity; but it was too hard a task for a solitary woman living far removed from London, and Pitt's requirements were unreasonable. At first he was fairly well satisfied with her proceedings, and in the February of 1700 he wrote in quite an affectionate strain, beginning "My dear," and concluding with "My hearty love and affection to yourself, wishing us a happy meeting." He sent a small diamond ring to his elder daughter, Essex, and "two small stones to make Lucy something."

But there were soon clouds upon the horizon. Whether Mrs. Pitt grew weary of Stratford and the society of her "pretty family," or whether her husband grew exacting and troublesome past endurance by a wife whose temper was none of the meekest, is not clear; but they fell out, and attempted to drag their kindred and acquaintance into their disputes. There is a letter to the governor from Peter Godfrey, an old friend, who had been attacked by both sides, and who was evidently a person of no tact or discretion. He complains that it was useless to

keep up a correspondence, "unless I should write you what I have already done, that your writings signifies little to one who will do but what she will, or advise you what I hear, which I find sours you beyond what is usual. . . . As for my going for Deal, I shall be as ready, if my company may be acceptable, to wait upon your lady thither whenever she will embark for India. . . . Pray what is it reigns in India that you are all upon the quarrels?" To this pertinent inquiry the governor loftily responded, after professing his loyalty to old friends: "Those that have known me longest must say that 'twas never my temper to be quarrelling and jangling."

If Mrs. Pitt ever seriously entertained the thought of going out to Fort St. George, she soon renounced it. The gossip, backbiting, and grievances, real or imaginary, of well-meaning friends increased the estrangement. The governor speaks of receiving several letters with complaints against his wife, but does not specify the correspondents to whom he was indebted for these kind offices. At the end of 1701 he wrote to his sister's husband, the Rev. Thomas Curgenven—who must have been a man of extraordinary sweetness of temper, since he was generally on fairly good terms with all the different members of the Pitt family:

"My wife has writ me little or nothing to the purpose this year, nor has sent me nothing, though I positively ordered her. She writes me God knows what, that she is about purchases, but

not a word of what some has cost or others will cost, I have no manner of account of what I left her, what she has received or paid since, what I have hence sent her, or what it sold for, but all railing against one or other, which has very much exposed my business and done me a great deal of prejudice, so that I find great inconveniences by trusting a woman with business, which I will avoid for the future."

In justice to Mrs. Pitt's sex it may be noted that when her husband trusted his business to male agents, he was no whit better pleased with the result.

The superstitious might say that the numerous vexations, both public and private, which began to press thickly upon the governor at this time, and the consequent change for the worse in his temper, were due to the influence of the great diamond of which he became possessed in March, 1702. Legends and fancies have clung about every celebrated gem, from the Koh-i-Noor to the great ruby of Burgundy, and Pitt's diamond, now known as the "Regent," had its share of such stories. A wild tradition, which Sir Henry Yule pronounces to be without foundation, fabled that it had been one of the eyes of an Indian god, and that it was stolen either at Pitt's instigation or with his connivance. Another story would have that it was found in the mines of Partiala, on the Kistna, by a slave, who concealed it in a wound in his thigh and fled. Unluckily for himself he confided

his secret to the captain of the ship in which he made his escape, and this man took possession of the diamond and flung the slave overboard. From the captain's hands it passed to "an eminent diamond merchant," who was made to part with it by Governor Pitt at a price considerably below its value. The story was used against Pitt by his enemies in the council and elsewhere, and was echoed by Pope in his well-known verses on "the honest factor."* Thanks to this and to other stories of a similar nature, Pitt's name for many years was a synonym with his contemporaries for a rich, tyrannical nabob who was not particular how he shook the pagoda-tree as long as the golden shower descended upon himself.

Pitt's own account of the transaction is given in a narrative drawn up for the instruction of his son in case of his own death, and is perfectly simple and straightforward. After the most solemn protestations that he is telling the truth, he explains that, hearing there were large diamonds for sale in Madras, some two or three years after his arrival as governor, he announced his willingness to buy them; that Ramchund, "one of the most eminent

*Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An honest factor stole a gem away:
He pledged it to the knight; the knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.
—*Moral Essays*, III.

Originally the last line ran, "So robbed the robber, and was rich as P——." Sir Balaam is supposed, on very inadequate ground, to have been intended for Pitt.

diamond merchants in those parts," brought down a number of stones to the fort, and among them the great diamond, for which he asked so large a price that Pitt would have nothing to say to it. Some time later Ramchund returned with the stone, and after a prolonged course of the haggling which an Oriental always expects with every bargain, great or small, the governor bought the stone for 48,000 pagodas,* and remained on friendly terms with the merchant, with whom he continued to have dealings and in whose hands he left a considerable sum of money at his departure. In all his dealings Pitt shows himself a just man, even generous on many occasions; and although he may sometimes have been hard and arbitrary, there is no ground for the belief that he would have taken advantage of his official position to bully a merchant, or that he would have sullied his fingers with dishonest gain.

But, once started, the legend grew and increased, and still hangs like a cloud about the memory of the governor. Lady Russell mentions a tradition of Swallowfield, the house bought by Pitt in his latter years, in which he died, "that at certain times the ghost of a 'black man' walks down Queen Anne's gallery, and that he is in some way connected with the diamond—either he is the murdered slave who originally found it in the mines of Parkal [Partiala], or he is an emissary of

* About £24,000.

the god Jagrenat, one of whose eyes furnished the diamond."*

However it was acquired, the great diamond brought nothing but care and misfortune to its possessors. Pitt's feverish anxiety lest it should be stolen, spoiled in the cutting, or sold below its value, told grievously on his health and temper. Its purchaser, the Regent Duke of Orleans, died before completing the instalments of the payment, for which presumably the French Government is still in debt to Pitt's heirs,† unless the heirs indemnified themselves by keeping some boxes of jewels, lodged with Pitt by the Regent as a pledge, that disappear from the story. After the September massacres in 1792, the diamond was stolen from the Garde Meuble, where it had been placed for safety with the other Crown jewels, and was not recovered till the end of 1793, when information given to the police enabled them to find it in a cabaret of the Faubourg St. Germain. During the troublous times that followed it was twice pawned, once to a German and once to a banker of Amsterdam, who admitted gaping crowds to view a facsimile of the diamond in a glass case, while the real jewel was all the while hidden in his wife's stays. Napoleon redeemed

* *Swallowfield and Its Owners.*

† When Pitt's children pressed for the payment of the remainder, the French Government acknowledged the debt, but declared "it was impossible to enter into the past transactions of the Regent."

it, and wore it set in the pommel of his sword until his fall. It is now kept in the Louvre.

After becoming possessed of this stone, Pitt could know no rest until it was cut and polished. He would not trust it to an agent, and as his affairs at home were in much confusion "for want of understanding as well as [for] some perverseness" on the part of his wife, he decided to send his son home in charge of it. Robert Pitt had long been desirous to return to England; but the instructions given him, at his departure and afterwards, by his affectionate father would have dismayed the most self-confident. Amongst other injunctions laid upon the luckless young man, who cannot have been more than three-and-twenty, we find that he was to write continual reports to his father of all public and private affairs that might affect his interests; to preserve the great diamond from all accidents that might befall it on the way, including the capture of the ship by an enemy; to superintend the plantations and nurseries at Stratford, the cutting of the diamond, and the education of his brothers and sisters; to make himself master of fortification and gunnery; to beware of vices and of an inconvenient or a disreputable marriage; and never to lend money but on unquestionable security. He was perpetually exhorted to be very loving to his brothers and sisters, and to be "very dutiful" to the mother whose "meddling" in her husband's affairs he was at the same time enjoined to suppress.

His first report on her proceedings and behaviour during her husband's absence was received by the governor with this comment: "If what you write of your mother be true, I think she is mad, and wish she was well secured in Bedlam." One could wish that Pitt had condescended to explain how his son was to retain any respect for either parent under these circumstances.

No sooner had he reached England than Robert found himself involved in a turmoil of business and perplexity. His mother naturally resented his interference with her; his brothers and sisters were not inclined to accept his control; candid friends were eager to let the governor know how Robert quarrelled with his family and neglected his father's old acquaintance; and the fearful storm, to which Addison alludes in his lines on the Duke of Marlborough, had blown down a number of trees on the Stratford estate, which the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury claimed as "top and lop." Pitt was already annoyed with his son for having neglected to write to him both during the voyage and after his arrival in England, and for drawing a bill on him for three hundred dollars when his ship stopped at the Cape. The exactions of the cathedral dignitaries put the finishing touch to his wrath. "Does the Dean of Sarum think that God Almighty sent that storm for they to make advantage out of others' losses?" he inquires with savage irony. I hear there was a fast ordered for that storm.

Sure those gentlemen that design to get by it will make a feast, and be so ungodly as to wish for more such. It is therefore my order to withstand their injustice, and not to suffer them to meddle with a tree, although I spend the value of the estate in defence thereof."

There was some excuse for Pitt's outburst, since his heart must have been very sore at this time. For his wife he had no tenderness left—in outward show at least; but his heart yearned over the children, whom he had left in the nursery and who were growing into men and women. He had particularly ordered Robert to send him a full account of them, their looks, and their dispositions, as soon as he was at home; and Robert's first letter was so meagre and unsatisfactory as to make his father declare that he would not have known from it of their existence. The first letters that came to Fort St. George from the governor's family after their brother's arrival bore nothing but complaints, each against all. It was a cruel disappointment for the father, who had expected some consolation for his business anxieties in the well-being and happiness of his children. Mrs. Pitt immediately hatched a violent quarrel with her son about the control of some property near Salisbury; Essex wrote to her father to accuse Robert of ill-temper and unkindness; Robert complained that, having been given the management of his sisters' affairs, they would not live with him. A better-tempered man than the

governor would have been sorely tried; and, to crown all, Robert must needs go and marry almost as soon as he had set foot on English shores.

The marriage seems to have been the best piece of work that Robert ever did. The lady was well connected, being the daughter of Harriet, Viscountess Grandison (who after the death of her first husband had married Lieutenant-General Stewart). Her fortune was slender, being no more than £2,000 down, with an additional £1,000 to be paid on the death of her step-father; but she was rich in other ways. All her father-in-law's correspondents speak of her sweetness, her accomplishments, her beauty, her sense, and her charm, and even the governor fell under her spell when he was introduced to her. In such a quarrelsome family she had a difficult part to play, and she seems to have laboured for peace whenever she could, and to have received the measure of gratitude usually bestowed on those who try to reconcile contending parties.

In his letter to his father Robert pleaded that his marriage had been made in deference to the governor's injunctions, and with the approval of his mother and Uncle Curgenven, and that it was "the universal report of the Governor's good and generous character" that had prevailed upon Lady Grandison to give her consent to it. All these fair words, and the hope delicately expressed by Robert that his father would not abandon him, and would find the new daughter-in-law "a comfort," did nothing

to mollify Pitt: "I believe you play the same game with me as with your mother, who writes me you were married before she saw your wife; and I believe you were so before you wrote to me, for several correspondents tell me that was the first thing you did, which has justly brought you the character of a giddy inconsiderate young fellow." To his friend Captain Harrison, Pitt had more to say in the same strain: "My disobedient son has not followed any one direction or order of mine, or had any regard to the advice I gave him before he parted with me. His sudden captivation must certainly have rendered him a light and inconsiderate fellow in the eyes of all men. The lady I'm a stranger to, and I believe shall always be so; if her character answers what you write, I wish she have not the worst of it; though, with her fortune and what he has of his own, with the advantages I have given him in his education, are [sic] very good working tools, and all he must ever expect from me."

* * *

Being determined not to waste his substance upon a family that had disappointed him, Governor Pitt now wrote minute directions to his friend Sir Stephen Evance on the subject of the allowance to be made to wife and children: "You may permit my wife to receive the income of my land at Old Sarum and St. Mary Blandford in Dorsetshire, to maintain her, her two daughters, and three sons; two of the

latter I believe may be come away, if so I desire you to disburse their maintenance, in which pray be thrifty, and charge them so too, or I'll put them to short allowance when I come home, and if my wife draws any bills upon you, I order 'em to be returned, and not a penny paid. If she can't live upon the income of my land let her starve, and all her children with her, therefore pay not one penny that she draws upon you."

After this, Mrs. Pitt settled at Bath with her daughters. Robert dutifully invited his sisters to spend a winter in his house in town, in order that they might have "the benefit of masters and the best society," but complained that his civility was thrown away, as they were set against him for some unknown reason. He was now M.P. for Old Sarum, with the governor's approval; but the style in which he thought it necessary to live and the amount spent on his election met with nothing but censure from his economical father: "You went down to Old Sarum against the election, sent down a man cook some time before, coach and six, five or six in liveries, open house for three or four months, and put me to about £500 charge. Where was the need of this? It never cost me above £10, which was for a dinner the day of election. . . . I charge you that all my business be managed with the greatest secrecy, and quiet imaginable, and without ostentation. But I think it is too late to forbid that, since you have set up to live at the rate I hear you do, which

has not created me a little envy, and makes me often remember Osborne that children are certain trouble but uncertain comforts."

The great diamond was entrusted to Mr. Cope, a jeweller, for cutting and polishing. It was a tedious process, as there were several flaws, and the pieces had to be sawn off at great expense. However, as three of these fragments sold for £2,000, Robert was in hopes that his father would be appeased. Unfortunately, at the beginning of the work, he had told his father that Mr. Cope expected the stone to make a brilliant of two hundred and eighty carats. As the cutting progressed, Mr. Cope found the outer coat so full of deep flaws that he was obliged to take off nine pieces altogether, and reduce the weight to less than one hundred and forty carats. Nothing would convince Pitt—who had expected it to cut to three hundred carats—that his son, Mr. Cope, and all concerned had not grossly and maliciously mismanaged the business, and he wrote himself to tell the jeweller his opinion of him: "You told my son 280 [carats] would make it the wonder of the world. I am sure it will be so, your paring it to 140." He concluded with the threat to come home speedily and discuss more fully with Mr. Cope about the matter—a cheerful prospect for Mr. Cope, who must have breathed a fervent thanksgiving when the state of the Company's affairs detained the governor at Fort St. George.

The stone being in what Robert Pitt quaintly

styles "its true polite shape," the next thing was to find a purchaser. Pitt was always of the opinion that if the war were over, the King of France or the King of Spain would be "the fairest chapman for it." He was determined not to part with it for less than £1,500 a carat to any foreign purchaser. "When we have a peace, it is not unlikely but the French King may buy it out of his wonted vain-glory, that the world may see, after so expensive a war, he is able to buy such a jewel from all the princes in Europe." At the same time, if it were bought for the English Crown, Pitt was willing to let it go at a reduced price. Believing it to be the finest diamond in the world, he was very anxious that it should remain in England, and had several devices by which this end was to be secured. "If we settle Charles III. on the throne of Spain, I know nothing that is portable [which] he can [so well] make his acknowledgements to our Queen in, as that concern of mine." This scheme proving impracticable, the governor tried another. There was a general rumour that the nation was "so gracefully inclined as to present Her Royal Majesty with the title of Empress," and he suggested that at the same time she should be presented with the great diamond. So desirous was he to oblige that if it were not convenient for him to be paid in ready money, he was willing to accept "a Parliamentary security." In the case of an offer from a foreign potentate he was more particular.

The diamond had made a great sensation in London; others besides its owner were of opinion that it would make a handsome addition to the Crown jewels, and the queen was approached on the subject. But good Queen Anne declined to have it; she had never, she said, in all her life bought a jewel for herself, and she considered the price far too heavy for a useless article of luxury. If the nation wanted to spend money, she would much rather that Greenwich Hospital were finished.

Soon after Robert Pitt had reached home, and before any news of him or of the diamond had come to Fort St. George, John Pitt died at Masulipatam. As has been said, the cousins at one time were allied in their "interloping" ventures, and by Pitt's account John was indebted to him for the money with which he started in business: "I may say, without vanity, I was, under God, his only support." Of late years there had been an estrangement between them, caused, in part at least, by the conduct of John Pitt's wife, whom the governor hated on account of some insult that he supposed himself to have received from her. After John's death his "virtuous melancholy relict," to quote the governor's phrase, begged that his corpse might be buried at Fort St. George. Pitt offered no objection to this; but on being further requested to "compliment the corpse" on its arrival with a salute from the fort guns, he roundly refused. His cousin John, on his last coming into the roads at Madras, had

declined to salute the king's flag, and was therefore entitled to no civility from him. The story that reached kindred and acquaintance in England was that the governor had denied Christian burial to his cousin's body, and Robert was at great pains to circulate the true version of the case. It cannot be said that Pitt treated his cousin's memory with decent respect, even if he were blameless with regard to the funeral ceremonies ; he cannot allude to John's death in the most distant manner without going out of his way to observe that it was no loss. He has always a sneer for John's widow ; and, having occasion to speak of John's son, he takes pains to add, "If he be no better than the father 'tis no great matter if there be never any more of the breed of him."

Harsh and ungracious as all this sounds, it is clear from his letters that Pitt could be kindly and generous. He was continually helping those who were in distress, or pretended that they were ; and although he might be deceived by one impostor at the beginning of the week, by the end of it he was as ready as ever to set another on his legs. The nephew of Pitt's old friend, Sir Theodore Jansen, made his appearance at Fort St. George and borrowed thirty pagodas * of the governor, who told Robert to recover what he could of the loan from the uncle. Going down to the hospital, Pitt found a young Englishman, who told a pitiful story. He

* "Which at 12*s.* 6*d.* bottomry is £18 5*s.*," explains Pitt.

was the son of Brigadier Ingoldsby, and, having run away from school, by some means had entered the Company's service, and was now "very ill and like to die." Upon this Pitt had him nursed till he recovered, excused him from duty, lent him money for his outfit, and put him on board a homeward-bound vessel under the charge of a friendly captain, who promised to let him eat at his table during the voyage. "If he should prove an impostor," wrote the governor to his son, "there is but so much lost; if otherwise, give my service to his father, and tell him I doubt not but his son has seen his errors, and will be dutiful for the future, having sowed his wild oats." Robert, who had received many lectures on lending money upon insufficient security, replied to his father's letter with unusual promptness; Sir Theodore Jansen had made no objections to paying his nephew's debts, but the *soi-disant* Ingoldsby was an impostor.

The governor's kindness was equally thrown away upon a certain Mr. Finch, nephew to Lord Nottingham, who came out to Fort St. George in the Company's service. Pitt recommended him as a member of the council, and treated him very well, until "a very impudent action" on the part of Mr. Finch called for a reprimand. As this action was to "send for the cook to the general table, and there beat him till he bled like a pig," it cannot be said that the reproof was undeserved; but Mr. Finch in a fit of the sulks resigned the Company's service and went home.

Exhortations to Robert to show kindness to the poorer members of his family are very frequent: "I would desire you to have some regard to your uncle and aunt Willis. She is the only sister I have alive, and if they have a daughter I should take it kindly if your wife would take her into her house and give her a reputable education, which charge I will willingly allow you, and help his sons what you can, and remember that we are not born only for ourselves, nor has God Almighty bestowed this plentiful fortune on me to give it only amongst my own children, but also necessitous relations and friends, which I will not fail to do for His glory and my own comfort and happiness." A little later Robert is ordered to put the youngest of the Willis boys to a very good school and maintain him there at the charge of the governor, who intended to have him educated and started in the world.

It was unnecessary to be related by blood to the governor in order to receive such substantial kindnesses. A godson of his, whose father had been killed at Acheen, leaving a widow and a large family, was sent to England by Pitt's arrangement to be boarded in the house of "some good body" at Salisbury while he attended the free school. There he found two other boys who were being maintained at the expense of Pitt, their father's godfather, in order that their slender fortune of £1,000 might remain intact until they were old enough to work for themselves.

The governor was ready to help his *protégés* in other ways. As a matrimonial agent he seems to have been shrewd and energetic. Mr. John Haynes writes to him from Cuddalore:

"Yours of the 11th instant I received, whereby find my expectations of the widow wholly frustrated, which is a great affliction hard to bear, but that my evil stars of late years have been predominant, which have accustomed me to frequent disappointments; therefore hope and believe this will not quite break my heart; though to miss a rich widow, tolerably handsome and not very old, is in my opinion a much greater misfortune than to lose half a dozen other mistresses, though in their prime of youth and beauty (if without money). I find there is no coming in for a rich widow in Madras without securing the reversion some years before their husband's death, therefore think had best bespeak the present widow against her becoming so a second time, thereby to anticipate other pretenders. So much for widows at present, having but to return your Honour thanks for your kind offer of assistance had there been hopes of succeeding. . . . In the postscript you are pleased to commend one Mrs. Middleton for a pretty woman, and who, you believe, will make an excellent wife. I cannot doubt but your experienced judgement therein must be staunch as in other more weighty affairs . . . and should think myself extremely happy in such a wife, but cannot, in conscience, endeavour to compass it by

making the lady miserable. You well know that the perquisites of a poor drudging book keeper will not maintain that lady as she deserves . . . but were I thought worthy to have the title Deputy Governor conferred on me by your Honour, should readily become a suitor to the good lady to complete my happiness in this world."

The ladies were also desirous of Pitt's aid and advice before bestowing themselves in marriage. Isabella Haynes (presumably sister to John Haynes) writes :

"The gentlemen are pretty civil to me now, but I can attribute that to nothing but Your Honour's goodness in making them so. I now humbly make bold to acquaint Your Honour that I have some thoughts of marrying Captain Greenhaugh, if Your Honour shall approve of it, but not else. Indeed the only reason that induces me to it is, I formerly made him a kind of promise, though, after which with my own free consent it was quite, as I thought, broke off by my brother, but he has now again so importunately renewed his courtship that I know not how to be rid of him. Another reason is that I may be freed from the courtship of some others in this place, which I think would be but as indifferent matches as the other. Could I have got home to England I would not have stayed here for the best husband in India."

Pitt's violent temper does not seem to have been dreaded by some of his friends, who had a large

confidence in his abilities and in his good-nature. One correspondent begs leave to introduce a Mrs. Anne Miller, "who goes to your parts to make her fortune, her father is a vintner and an honest man, but has many children, and lives in Wood Street." Personally Mrs. Anne Miller was unknown to the writer, who had been asked to recommend her by his wife's monthly nurse, but he had no scruple in troubling Pitt with her story. A lady begs Pitt to befriend one or other of her cousins, of whom she seems to have had a large contingent, and to send her the accounts of her *small adventure* in his hands. A woman's little attempts at speculation are generally the wonder and the torment of her male friends, and the governor, while raising no objection to the cousins, writes to Robert: "There is as great confusion in my accounts as in my family. Pray discharge that adventure of Lady Granville's, and let me hear no more of it."

Sometimes the choleric governor was driven to act as peacemaker, and tried to reconcile fathers and sons with indifferent success. Sir John Chardin thanks Pitt for his goodness to his son, which has been thrown away upon the worthless young man, who cannot be persuaded to amend his ways. A certain Edward Ettrick offended his father by his marriage, and Pitt, so ungracious to his son in like case, writes to tell Mr. Ettrick how Edward has improved in his behaviour of late, and to beg him to be lenient, and to allow the young couple

something for their housekeeping. "For is it not much better to give our children something in our life-time to see how they manage it and improve it, than to keep it like curmudgeons, and leave it them at our death because we can't help it?"

From all this it would seem that Pitt, if hot-tempered and exacting, was tender-hearted, and would have been affectionate if he had met with any encouragement in his own family. Had he found a gentle but high-spirited wife, who would have soothed his paroxysms of wrath without fearing them, and had his children been loving and happy amongst themselves, even the influence of bottled cider in a South Indian climate might not have had a serious effect on his health and spirits. Unluckily for all parties, Mrs. Pitt was as violent as himself, without the warm heart under the harsh exterior. When her family were outwardly in decent accord, she was eager to foment new quarrels, and the strife between herself and Robert was an open scandal to all the governor's acquaintance. Robert is aptly described by one of his father's friends as having "a great deal of wit, but wanting solid wisdom." He had inherited an uncontrollable temper from both parents, and it was not improved by the gout and other painful complaints which broke down his health in comparative youth. All the children of Thomas and Jane Pitt seem to have resembled one or the other of their parents too closely for them to live in tolerable harmony.

A possible exception was Lucy, afterwards Lady Stanhope, whom a tradition in her husband's family makes "gentle." Before her marriage she joined with Essex in quarrelling with her brother and defying father and guardians; but she may have been led astray by her elder sister. She met with the usual fate of the best member of an unamiable family, sinking early into the grave—"whither she was hurried by her physicians," as her father believed.

For some time after Robert's return to England there had been mutterings and grumblings—complaints from him that his wife was not treated with proper respect, reproaches from his mother and sisters that he used them unkindly; and in 1706 the storm burst. From that time there was no further hope of real peace in the family. It is difficult from the governor's letters, which are often inarticulate in their fury, to make out the final causes of the explosion. He had, or thought he had, reason to be jealous of his wife. Seeing how little he professed to set by her, it is strange that he should have been annoyed, but his pride was wounded, and perhaps in the corner of his heart there was a tender feeling for the woman of whom he had taken no notice for many years, save to abuse her. Then Robert's extravagance and his negligence (real or supposed) of his father's concerns were a perpetual cause of irritation. As far as can be guessed from Pitt's tirades, Robert, finding he had not room in his house to accommodate his mother

and sisters (possibly because his wife was expecting one of her numerous confinements), had obliged them to leave it; and they had retaliated by turning out of doors one of his children who was at Stratford. Lastly, William, one of Pitt's younger sons, had died of small-pox, and the charges for his funeral were what his father thought excessive.

The governor's letters on these subjects displayed powers of invective worthy of his grandson. Up to this time his grim sarcasms and sudden bursts of indignation might all have been described by the homely word "tantrums." One feels that whilst thus lashing himself into fury, he could have been mollified by judicious treatment, and that it might even have been possible to make him laugh over his own extravagances. He now takes a different tone. Disappointed in his fondest hopes, wounded to the quick, it was almost impossible henceforth for him to be pleased with anything that his children might do. They cared nothing for him nor for each other; they resolved to go their own way, and make the whole world witness to their disgraceful quarrels. Let them have it as they would, he would trouble himself no more for them.

"What hellish planet is it that influences you all, and causes such unaccountable distraction that it has published your shame to the world, which has so affected me that I cannot resolve what to do? Have all of you shook hands with shame, that you regard not any of the ties of Christianity, humanity,

consanguinity, duty, good morality, or anything that makes you differ from beasts, but must run from one end of the kingdom to the other, aspersing one another, and aiming at the ruin and destruction of each other? . . . How do you think this has chagrined me, and what anxious as desperate thoughts it has brought into my mind, and damped my desire of ever seeing you more, or any of you all, for I can promise myself no comfort of you."

A week later he writes again to Robert:

"Not only your letters, but all I have from friends are stuffed with an account of the hellish confusion that is in my family, and by what I can collect from all my letters, the vileness of your actions on all sides are not to be paralleled in history. Did ever mother, brother, and sisters, study one another's ruin and destruction more than my unfortunate and cursed family have done? and I wish you have not had the greatest share in it, for I cannot believe you innocent. . . . What have I fatigued for after this manner, and lived so many years in exile from my country and friends (I had enough to subsist on and that very handsomely too) but to make my children easy in their circumstances and me happy in their company; and having by God's blessing acquired such a competency as I never expected or could hope for, so as that I should have been able to establish a family as considerable as any of the name, except our kinsman George Pitt [of Strathfieldsaye], and now to have all blasted by an

infamous wife and children! It is such a shock as man never met with, and whether I shall overcome it or sink under it, God knows. Is this the way to invite me home? When I am well assured you are all of you thoroughly reformed, I may think of it; but as matters stood at the writing of your letter, I think your company hell itself. . . .

"It is said in all companies you expose your brothers and sisters, who ought to conceal their faults and support their character. . . . What makes you quarrel with them? Is it that you would have me think that you are the saint of the family? No, I know you too well, and parted with you when you were at man's estate, but left them all poor innocent children."

He then inveighs against Robert's extravagance:

"I had a house in London which stood me in £120 per annum, kept coach and horses, servants and all answerable, always three or four good dishes of meat at my table, as good wine as the world afforded, and plenty, and made my friends and relations very welcome, and had always twelve or fourteen in family; my pocket expenses and all manner of others included, it never exceeded a thousand pounds per annum. But you are got to the expensive end of the town [Robert had a house in Golden Square] where money melts like butter against the sun. . . . You say my great concern [the diamond] is the wonder of the world—so is the confusion in my family."

To remedy this confusion, Pitt now took stringent measures. His younger children were to be removed from the guardianship of mother and brother, and transferred to that of Mr. Curgenven and George Pitt of Strathfieldsaye. The sons were to choose some profession, and "busk for their bread or starve." The governor's original instructions to his wife had been to spare no expense on his daughters' education; if she attempted to obey him in this one point, he never had his money's worth. The few letters from Miss Essex Pitt that have been preserved are singularly ill-spelt, and betray a deplorable ignorance of the elements of English grammar. No more money was to be wasted upon them henceforth, but they were to be "married off" as speedily as possible to any one who was willing to have a bride with a portion of £6,000. As for Mrs. Pitt, she was to be offered £100 a year to retire into private life, and give up all attempts at interfering with her husband's concerns; if this would not content her, she might have £200, but no more.

Mr. Curgenven's blindness prevented him from taking any active part in the business, and he must almost have blessed his affliction when he thought of the troubles in which he would otherwise have been involved. His colleague, Mr. George Pitt, was both sensible and kind; it was easier for him, as a distant relation whose interests were in no way affected, to exercise some control over the disputants than it had been for Robert, and he succeeded, not

in making peace, which would have been a task beyond human skill, but in keeping their feuds within decent bounds.

Before any of Robert's deprecatory letters could reach him, the governor relented sufficiently to send a small ring as a present to his grandchild and goddaughter, little "Harriot," and a letter to her mother, with whom he sometimes communicated; but for Robert himself he had no word of kindness:

"I cannot enough lament the ill state of my family, and wish there had not been such ignominious actions done by any of you as never can be obliterated; and will not only pull down the vengeance of God Almighty, but the daily curses of an abused and injured father."

To a plea of illness from Robert he makes the gracious rejoinder:

"I wish those sore eyes of yours did not come by drinking, and that generally ushers in gaming, of either of which vices or any other dishonourable action if I find you guilty, you may be assured I will give you no quarter."

Whether it was in buying a commission for one brother, or in burying the other, Robert was equally to blame:

"Friends inform me that my son Robin has bought his brother Thomas the employ of a Captain of Horse in Ireland, that he gave £1,200 for it, being much more than it is worth, and that the equipment cost £300 more. . . . Doubtless it must be sufficient

to support my son Thomas, therefore I positively order that you pay him not a penny more of my money, nor shall he ever have any more without he well deserves it. I am surprised at the extravagant funeral of my son William, for I should have thought that half the sum charged would have buried all my family."

Officious friends, whether through the natural stupidity of their kind or through malice prepense, did all they could to make matters worse by sending gossip and tittle-tattle out to Fort St. George. There never yet was a family quarrel but the assistance of conscientious friends made it ten times worse, if it did not originally cause it. One report which Pitt mentions, that Robert ill-treated his wife, is scarcely likely to have been true. It is difficult to believe that she can have been very happy with a husband who inherited the dispositions of both his parents; but there is evidence that he loved her, after his fashion, and recognised his good-fortune in marrying her.

An exception to the majority of Pitt's acquaintance was Colonel John Wyndham, who wrote to assure him of Robert's good behaviour: "My brother Wadham, who is a good judge, takes often occasion to applaud his management both in economy and business of trade." Robert wrote to explain that finding the commission in the troop of Irish horse too expensive, he had not purchased it for Thomas, and was profuse in explanations and apologies.

Somewhat appeased, the governor wrote exhortations to Robert to avoid extravagance, but to live "handsome and reputable," and gave him leave to advance £100 to Thomas—"for I would not have him so necessitated as to put him upon doing ill things, or appear shabby," and solemnly conjured him to live lovingly with all and have "none of these heathenish and hellish doings as formerly." In earnest of what he would do to reward good conduct (there is a pleasing flavour about the transaction as if it had taken place at Mrs. Kilner's "Village School," where Mrs. Bell gave Master Bill Crafty "an apple and a biscuit to encourage him to be good") the governor sent pieces of gold and silver tissue to Mrs. Robert Pitt, Essex, and Lucy, as well as casks of arrack and mangoes to be distributed among friends. Whether moved by this generosity or by their father's exhortations, in February, 1708, all the children of Governor Pitt signed a joint letter to their father, expressing sorrow for their unnatural discords and a resolution to live in harmony for the future.

Such a state of things was too good to last, and Mrs. Pitt was the first to show signs of restlessness. In a mysterious letter to her eldest son she expresses her satisfaction that his father has promised to do something for him, complains of the smallness of her daughters' allowances, and expresses her intention of marrying them well. As for her own affairs, "Your father's generous allowance to me will serve

to pay rent, and for the rest he shall find I can live upon the air as well and better than ever I did in my life, for I won't disgrace him by living meanly no longer; and since he don't know what is fit for me to have and do, he will know that I do." The letter continues in the same strain for several involved sentences, and has been endorsed by Robert: "My mother's letter about her power to embroil my father's affairs."

The governor by this time was in the thick of the disputes with the council in the fort and the directors in London, which were to end in his recall. It is impossible to give the details here, but it may be said that, although Pitt was arbitrary and wilful, his judgment in matters of business was seldom at fault, and that he left the Company's trade in far better condition than he found it. He lacked a conciliatory manner, and the climate was not likely to develop suavity and urbanity in him or in his council. A very heated dispute was caused by their refusal to conform to the old custom of going to church with him on Sundays, and they were in no better accord on more important questions. Among the directors at home a party had gained the ascendant that was hostile to Pitt, and the governor, overworked and in great anxiety, was ready to lay the blame of everything that was amiss upon Robert's negligence in informing him of what passed at the East India House. "Since you left here," he demanded, half plaintively, half indignantly,

"have you given me a plenary account of any particular affair, ever sent me a collection of public news, or one book of esteem, or as much as one drop of curious liquor, or anything else delightful in these parts?"

The arrival of the letter from his children soothed him to a certain extent, and he forthwith gave George Pitt power to augment their allowances at his discretion. Mrs. Robert Pitt, who had lately been prevented from writing to her father-in-law, as she intended, by the sudden arrival into the world of a son (William, Earl of Chatham), was presented with a coat, sash, and girdle, and a chintz bed, "all the finest procurable," which had been sent to Pitt by Shah Alum, son of Aurungzebe. To his little goddaughter Pitt sent a delightful plaything—nothing more nor less than a "little coffree boy," who must have caused as much trouble in her father's household as the monkeys which the fine ladies of that time were accustomed to keep as pets.

In January, 1709, the board of directors in England decided to recall Pitt, the immediate cause of their displeasure being his conduct during the caste riots in Madras, in which he supported one faction and a Mr. Fraser, his particular enemy, the other. Pitt had been carrying matters with too high a hand, as even his friends were obliged to admit, and his threat to horsewhip and hang Mr. Fraser, after one of their differences of opinion, could not be

justified. So far apart were India and England that the recall, sent from England in January, did not reach Fort St. George until the evening of September 17th.

The next morning was Sunday; but Pitt summoned the council, handed over his accounts and papers, challenged them to produce a single instance of injustice committed by him during his administration, and by eight o'clock in the morning had surrendered his charge to Mr. Addison, the successor appointed by the board. Addison, already in a bad state of health, was completely overcome by his position. He avowed his intention of following Pitt's policy, but was immediately taken so ill that he could do nothing. Pitt, who went to see him, declares that the unhappy man believed himself to have been poisoned by some member of the "Right-hand Caste" (the faction befriended by Fraser) in order to make room for "that wicked and vilest of wretches." Any one who knows the propensity of some of the natives of India to mingle ground glass and other unwholesome ingredients with the food and liquor of those to whom they have taken a dislike will not dismiss the idea as impossible. "The poor man, few days after, died, and in such confusion and agonies that I have not seen the like," Pitt declared; and in his long residence in Madras he must have seen many writhing in the last agonies of cholera or fever. The funeral delayed Pitt's departure for three days. On October 21st

he quitted Madras for ever, leaving Fraser practically master of the situation.

* * *

The likelihood of being captured by the French made Pitt leave his ship at the Cape and come home by a Danish vessel, which took him to Bergen. Thence he wrote a peremptory letter to his executors in London stating that his daughters had chosen to disobey him (apparently by declining to live with the guardians whom he had appointed); "therefore I desire that you pay each of them quarterly, the mother and two daughters, twelve pounds, ten shillings, and no more will I allow them whilst I live, and I have made the same provision for them in my will; and for fortunes I will not give them a penny unless my cousin Pitt has gone so far as to engage his honour in a match, then that must and shall be made good."

This was a hopeful augury of what might be expected on the governor's arrival. George Pitt now came forward and behaved with real kindness and wisdom. He wrote at once to Pitt, trying to give as good an aspect as possible to the condition of his family, and succeeded in drawing a letter from him in a milder strain. He then wrote to Essex and Lucy, reminding them how he had cautioned them against disobedience, and advising them to take advantage of their father's relenting mood, return to their brother, and keep upon good

terms with him until Pitt's arrival. "The harmony your father will find amongst you will contribute more to the healing the unhappy differences that have been in your family than all the endeavours of your friends together."

Essex and Lucy seemingly took this advice to heart, for we find the former keeping up a familiar correspondence with her sister-in-law. In spite of the £6,000 portion offered with them, neither had succeeded as yet in getting a husband; but then, as one of their father's correspondents had despondingly informed him, "Men of estates are scarce and women plenty, so that they do not easily go off without a great deal of money, though they be never so virtuous and pretty." Essex was quite ready to be married, as may be seen from a passage in one of her letters, given here with its original spelling: "We go to Mr Bartmansemmer's very ofone, and are very much in his favor. I was in hopes of gitting of him at one time, but, the other day, I was strock dead all at once, for he told me he never desind to marry." She did ultimately find a husband in Mr. Cholmondeley, of Vale Royal, while Lucy became the wife of General (afterwards Earl) Stanhope.

There is a disappointing lack of information about the governor's return to his family and his proceedings during the next few years. He reached England in 1711, and was graciously pleased to show satisfaction with his daughter-in-law, whom

he received as a guest in his house, and whose children became great favourites with him. It does not appear that he made any attempt to see his wife or held any communication with her.

After his treatment by the directors he would have no more to do with the East India House, and transferred his energies to the House of Commons, where he sat as Member for Old Sarum. An uncompromising Whig, a zealous upholder of the Protestant faith and the Hanoverian succession, he considered the rest of the world deplorably lax, if not actually seditious, and had no hesitation in avowing his opinions. In April, 1714, when the House was passing an address to the queen, we have a glimpse of the fiery old nabob from a record in a contemporary diary. "Governor Pits" declared himself against every part of the address, and maintained that our one aim should be to weaken and humiliate France as much as possible. To effect this object he moved that an address should forthwith be sent to the queen, humbly begging her majesty to lend her present Ministry to the king of France, to govern his country for him for the space of three years, at the end of which time it was certain to be reduced by their management to as miserable a state as any English heart could wish.

Robert was of another mould, either with leanings towards the opposite party or without his father's zeal, and many were the ratings which he had to

endure on his political sins from the time of his first election to Parliament. His dissatisfaction with the state of public affairs led him to absent himself from the House; but in the governor's opinion this was little better than voting with the Tories, and voting with the Tories meant combining with those who were "contriving to put a French kickshaw on the throne again." To Pitt, the "Pretender" seemed always in wait to achieve England's downfall, playing the part of bogey filled to later generations of Englishmen by Napoleon Buonaparte or the Church of Rome.

Robert's indifference to the welfare of his country, even after he had been appointed clerk of the Green Cloth to the Prince of Wales in 1715, with a salary of £500 a year, and very little to do for it, was a continual grievance with his father. When the Jacobite insurrection broke out, Pitt waxed almost hysterical, and a supposed plot to murder the Royal Family and their adherents—to which he imagined himself likely to have fallen a victim—gave him an opportunity of pointing a moral which he did not let slip. "Since last post I have had it reiterated to me that in all company you are vindicating Ormonde and Bolingbroke, the two vilest rebels that ever were in any nation, and that you still adhere to your cursed Tory principles, and keep those wretches company who hoped by this time to have murthered the whole royal family; in which catastrophe your father was sure to fall, as was

certainly designed at the signing those bonds, and to have taken possession of my house and all that could be found therein; never a viler man in the world, and the same stamp all your acquaintance." After delivering himself of this incoherent but emphatic abuse, the old gentleman made arrangements for inviting his grandchildren to dinner, and wrote two days later to assure their delinquent father that they were well.

Shortly afterwards we find the whole family once more engaged in a violent quarrel, Robert being the chief offender. It is impossible to trace the causes, which were probably unknown to the disputants themselves. The first threatenings of the storm were heard when Robert, who had offended his father by his remissness in attendance at Court, proposed coming up to town from Stratford, and was told, "You may stay in the country or come; it is all one to me." Then Robert refused to take any notice of his sister's child when it was carried into the room by its devoted grandfather, or to go and see his sister (apparently Lucy Stanhope), with whom he was not on good terms. The governor's displeasure was sedulously increased by the other members of his family. Lady Grandison, and her second husband, General Stewart, who happened to be in town, did the best they could for Robert, and finding that the old man declined to listen to them—or, as the General phrases it, "industriously waved" any conversation on the subject, Lady Grandison

sent for the indefatigable George Pitt. If ever any man earned the blessing of the peacemakers, and earned it hardly, that man was the "able, honest" cousin whom the governor had made his executor.

Letters written by Robert and carefully revised by General Stewart and George Pitt did nothing to soften the governor, who at the same time was busy petting and spoiling Robert's children, dressing out the girls in fine clothes with the help of Mrs. Cholmondeley, who on this occasion acted with "great care and kindness." Poor Mrs. Robert Pitt wrote to her father-in-law, and received for answer much abuse of Robert and an intimation that no letters from him would in future be answered by his father. A few months previously the governor had been pathetically complaining that writing was not so much his talent as formerly, and that it was all he could do to write what was absolutely necessary. He did himself an injustice. If his later letters are more brief than those sent from Fort St. George, they are quite as spirited.

Shortly afterwards the old gentleman could not refrain from letting his son know that he had kissed hands on his appointment as Governor of Jamaica and that Mrs. Cholmondeley had given birth to a daughter. Mrs. Robert Pitt ventured to send her congratulations, and received the following reply:

"I received yours of the 28th last month, and had you enclosed it in your husband's, it would have saved me fivepence. I thank you for your

congratulations of my daughter being safe, and wish there was a better harmony in my family than at present is, or as far as I see, like to be; and that some, of late, had not given me just cause to revive my resentments. I know not by whose advice you have acted, nor your husband who never followed mine. I am busy night and day to prepare for my departure, being what I most long to see."

Other letters follow in the same strain, reiterating his weariness of the quarrels at home and his wish to "seek quiet" and forget his troubles in some foreign country. Yet, after all, the old man did not go to Jamaica. Unexpectedly the Regent Orleans took a fancy to have the great diamond, and after much chaffering, in which John Law, the notorious adventurer, took part, and much anxiety on the journey with it to France, owing to a conviction that innkeepers, fellow-travellers, and other harmless persons were plotting to rob him of the jewel, Pitt disposed of his "grand concern" for £125,000.* Thereupon he resigned the Governorship of Jamaica, bought several estates, including that of Boconnoc, in Cornwall, and disposed himself to end his days at home.

Again there was an interval of comparative peace. The king and the Prince of Wales at this time set an example to their subjects by becoming reconciled, to the great joy "of all that love old

* The Regent agreed to pay £130,000, £5,000 of which was given to Mr. Law as his fee for managing the transaction.

England," as Pitt wrote to his son. Even the elder Mrs. Pitt was moved by this touching exhibition of right feeling, and adjured Robert to "go and do likewise" by making friends with his brother Thomas, who had been raised to the Irish peerage as Lord Londonderry. "You see when eyes are open and malicious stories set in a true light what vast alterations it makes in opinions," concludes the old lady, when writing a full account of the prince's excellent behaviour to her daughter-in-law, "which, I pray God, give us all grace and humility to consider as we ought." It was an unwonted thing for the elder Mrs. Pitt to preach peace and good-will, but she was remarkably gracious to her eldest son and his wife at this time, entreating them to come to Bath, as lodgings were cheap on account of the fall of South Sea stock. The crisis in finance had caused a general depression, she said, and people were too downhearted even to talk scandal, and the wits, for want of encouragement, had ceased their usual chatter, so that Bath was more agreeable than she had ever known it.

It was only a temporary improvement. A few years later, Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, went to take the Bath waters, and wrote to Robert Pitt's daughter, Anne, then maid-of-honour to Queen Caroline: "I must say this in praise of the waters, that they create a great benevolence of temper in public; but as I am famous for my penetration, I have discovered that [after taking them] there issues a

sharp humour that can be discharged only at the tongue and into the ear of their next neighbour."

There were a few trifling breezes, ever and anon, to disturb the family harmony. Robert Pitt, having been induced by his father, sorely against his will, to stand for Oakhampton, incurred a bill for election expenses which caused the old gentleman to "swear most heartily." Then Robert wished to undergo a course of medical treatment at Bath and Bristol, and his father was disappointed that little Harriet was not allowed to winter with him while her parents travelled from place to place in search of the health that Robert was never to find. Apparently Robert had wished his father to accommodate more of the family, and, being disappointed in this, declined to part with "Heriot," alleging that he knew she would not have been welcome in Pitt's house: "I wish you would in your next write plain who it is that you mean Heriot would not have been welcome to," writes the injured grandfather, forgetting his grammar in his disappointment. On a previous occasion he had been very angry with Robert for turning his mother and sisters out of the house; "it was very hard you could not spare them one story. I should have done it to your wife and children had they been twice as many." Now, forgetting this, he impressed upon Robert the fact that "my family is so numerous that I cannot have reasonable conveniency for them all, nor will I ever make myself

uneasy in any of my houses to accommodate any of my family."

The grandchildren were the chief bond between the governor and his eldest son. The old man loved to carry off the boys "and some of their comrogues" from Eton to spend a few days at Swallowfield with him; and when little Katy Pitt wanted to learn geography it was to her grandfather, not to her father, that she applied. After the governor's death his partiality for his grandson and namesake Thomas was made a grievance against Thomas by Robert.

In February, 1723, Lady Stanhope died, and from that time her father began visibly to break. He was left guardian to her children, Earl Stanhope being already dead, and he found the trouble of looking after them and putting them to suitable schools more than he could well endure. The last few years of his life are a melancholy record. His health gone, his temper become a curse to himself and all around him, lonely in spite of his large family, too ill to attend properly to his own business, but firmly convinced that no one could be trusted to take it off his hands, life held nothing worth having for the rich and prosperous nabob. Suspicious of plots of every kind, certain that he was going to be ruined, he dragged out the remnant of his days. A cousin, Henry Sutton, one of the few in whom he still reposed some confidence, wrote to Robert, after having had a disagreement with

Colonel John Pitt, "As to letting the Governor know of this, I am sure that would signify nothing. I must expect no redress from him, unless I could be content to be paid in curses and reproaches, the usual return he makes his best servants for their fidelity and diligence. He is grown so extraordinary humoursome and testy now, that a man must have better luck or more art than I am master of, who can please him twice together." There were suspicions that Pitt was being defrauded by a woodman in his employ, but none of his servants durst tell him, "because the Governor is so passionate," pleaded one of them in excuse to Robert. Sutton, sent down to Boconnoc, could not think that the governor had been cheated "in the manner those informers would make him believe," and came to the wise resolution to let Robert know of those things which "ought to be animadverted," and to arrange with him whether the governor should be told of them; "for since every trifle gives him such uneasiness and puts him into an heat, we ought to be the more cautious in writing for the sake of his quiet and repose."

The old man was fast breaking down; he complained that the journey to London tired him almost to death, and that he declined very much, and "was trying to do all the good he could whilst living." He even goes so far as frequently to express regret at his son's bad health, in which he had hitherto expressed a scornful disbelief, and once

sends him "an unquestionable receipt" against one of his maladies. His heart was aching for a little tenderness, and there was none to give it. "I shall be ready to assist your son Thomas in his improvements and education abroad. Your son William is a hopeful lad, and [I] doubt not but he will answer yours' and all his friends' expectations." Cruelly disappointed in his children, his hopes were all transferred to the younger generation. One may well imagine how he would have gloried in the triumphs of his grandson and applauded his denunciations of France, the hereditary enemy; but at the time of his grandfather's death the future Lord Chatham was not eighteen.

In January, 1726, died Lady Grandison, and after three days' lying-in-state was deposited in the Duke of Buckingham's vault in Westminster Abbey (the General, her husband, sparing no expense), "with four dukes for pall-bearers and eight earls assistant." "All that were her friends are glad she is out of this world," wrote Pitt. Perhaps he was thinking of himself, for he might truly have said:

> "There's neither friend nor foe of mine
> But wishes I were away."

His old friend Sir Thomas Hardy often visited him in town and sent reports to Robert, whose health detained him in Bath. Colonel John Pitt was with his father, "so that we are all very happy if the keys were not carried to the old gentleman's bedside

at ten o'clock every night, so that there is no going to the masquerade next Thursday night without leave."

In March, Hardy writes that the old gentleman has been ill, but is now pretty well, and although complaining much of "want of stomach" eats more than Hardy himself.

The end came suddenly, as often happens in such a case. After two days' illness, Thomas Pitt died at Swallowfield, at the end of April, 1726. He was not much over seventy, but his life had held much hard work in a dangerous climate, and very little pleasure or contentment. He had made the East India Company "vastly rich, and famous throughout those parts of the world for honourable and just dealings." He had amassed a great fortune, he had owned the largest diamond then known to the world, and he had gained nothing save trouble and vexation for himself. He had been a faithful servant to his Company (after his "pyrott" days were over)—a wise and kindly friend to needy and distressed kinsfolk and acquaintance; but there is no sign that he ever received much gratitude for it. Like Rob Roy, "he was a hedge unto his friends, a heckle to his foes"; but his friends, on a sudden change in his humour, often found themselves "heckled," and in their resentment forgot all his benefits.

After his death his family were plunged into indecent quarrels over the provisions of his will, in which it would be fruitless to follow them. Robert

forbids his eldest son, Thomas, to hold any correspondence with his uncles, on account of their "untoward behaviour." Thomas was left a handsome annuity until he should succeed to the estate, which can have given him little satisfaction, since his father took it as a grievance, suddenly and capriciously withdrew his allowance, rated him for extravagance, for negligence in writing, and for everything that he did or omitted to do, in a strain that recalls Governor Pitt—with this difference: old Pitt's wrath was like the full overflowing of a torrent, sweeping all before it; Robert's peevish displeasure resembled nothing so much as the perpetual fretful trickle of an ill-fitting tap.

There is no sign that Governor Pitt ever sought reconciliation with his wife or held any communication with her after his return to England. So strong was his resentment that all his estates were purchased in the name of trustees to bar her claim for dower. The annuity of £200 was all that was secured to her at his death. She must have had independent means, for she was never straitened for money, and allowed her daughters before their marriages to spend the £200 for pin-money.

"I make no distinction between women that are reputed ill, and such as are actually so," the governor had written to his son at the time of the great quarrel in the family; "wherefore I have discarded and renounced your mother for ever, and will never see her more, if I can avoid it." We have no means

of knowing whether he had any justification. After taking into consideration the scandal-mongering prevalent at Bath, the kindness and tact of friends, and Pitt's own jealous, suspicious temper, it is most probable that the whole story (of which we have no details) had as little foundation in fact as many of the other *canards* that reached Madras. Mrs. Pitt's letters are those of an ill-tempered woman, but not of a vicious one, and if she had really been to blame, it is not likely that Robert would have invited her to his house or allowed her to associate and correspond with his wife. But she came of a proud race, and would not justify herself; if her husband could do without her, she could do without him. He kept his word, and she kept hers. The shadows lengthened, the good things which each had thought to enjoy turned to dust and ashes, children and friends were swept away, but husband and wife sat apart, alone in their old age. Railing against the world that had cheated him, the old man died and made no sign; and the wife from whom he had been separated for so many years could not survive him. In nine months she was dead, and the comical, pitiful, sordid tragedy had been brought to an end. Perhaps in another world, before each goes to his appointed place, there may be time and opportunity for the explanations which some of us were too proud to offer and others too angry to hear. For the sake of such as Thomas Pitt and Jane Innes, we may hope that it will be granted.

VI.

A SPINSTER AND A LADY BOUNTIFUL OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

ELLENOR FRERE
(*b.* 1713; *d.* 1801).

ELLENOR FRERE (LADY FENN)
(*b.* 1744; *d.* 1813).

VI.

A SPINSTER AND A LADY BOUNTIFUL OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

MOST of the women whose stories have already been given were brought into prominence either by their high birth or by the stress of circumstances. One is sometimes curious to know what lives were led by those who stayed quietly at home, far from the splendour of a court or the terror of a battle or a siege.

In turning over some old family papers which the kindness of a relative had placed at my disposal, I came upon the story of two women of a bygone age—an aunt and a niece. In manners, thoughts, and habits the aunt seems parted from the niece by more than one generation. One who was not in her first youth when the clans were gathering round the prince's standard at Glenfinnan, and had heard "the King over the water" toasted at dinner, belongs to a very different age from one who fought the battle of education with Mrs. More and Mrs. Trimmer. Yet the aunt lived to see a new century, dying in 1801 in full possession of her wits and her

memory, while the niece survived her only for twelve years. The aunt, although wealthy and of good family, never married, and lived quietly near the home of her youth, occupying herself in unostentatious deeds of kindness among her neighbours of all classes; the niece, married yet childless, also lived among her own people, but her schemes for educating children (and their parents), or for enlarging the sphere of female labour among the villagers, closely resemble those of a philanthropic lady of the present day. Both, however, were fully alive to that precept of the Church Catechism (now thought degrading to the dignity of board-school children, but then taught to rich and poor alike)—to do their duty in that state of life unto which it should please God to call them; and if their conception of duty was not always in accord with modern scientific and economic methods, their intentions were none the less admirable. Not a single incident which is other than commonplace can be recorded of either of their lives, yet there is some interest in finding an answer to the question which some of us must have asked over and over again: "What did the women do, a hundred years ago, who did nothing in particular?"

Ellenor Frere, the aunt, was born in 1713. Her home at Thwaite Hall, Suffolk, with a devoted father, mother, and brother, must have been unusually happy, and there was always a second home for her in the house in London where lived her aunt, the

wife of Lord Chief Baron Reynolds. To the childless couple "Nelly" was as a daughter, and if her position as an only daughter with but one brother may have been solitary, there was a multitude of cousins on her father's side who were delighted to have her company in a party of pleasure. Her education was limited in range, but sound, as was then the fashion for young ladies who were educated at all. She studied history and divinity, and made copious notes in quaint little books with marbled covers, some of which have been still preserved, and contain information about every conceivable subject, from the planets to the cherubim, and from the discovery of the Bath waters by Julius Cæsar to the exact day of the month on which Methuselah died. That she also studied French is evident from a letter addressed to her by the Lord Chief Baron himself, beginning and ending with formal compliments to "Monsieur votre pere," "Madame votre mere," and "L'Academicien, votre fere." After it was written, her "très-affectionné Oncle et très-humble Serviteur" was evidently seized with doubts either of her scholarship or of his own, for he gives the gist of his letter in a hasty postscript: "If you will be so good as to order my bitch (Dolly) to be sent to Tony Brightwell who stays for that purpose at the Buckshead, you may decypher my Letter at your leisure." Her writing in extreme old age was very tremulous, and her punctuation conspicuous by its absence; but her note-books are

neatly and clearly written, presenting no difficulties to the reader, and her spelling is above the average of that day.

It is difficult to say whether Ellenor Frere were beautiful. She steadily resisted all entreaties to sit for her portrait, and the only likeness preserved of her is a little silhouette caught by a great-nephew when fourscore years had sharpened her nose and chin, and the loss of her teeth had destroyed the curve of that "malicious little mouth" which her admirers once found so charmingly provoking. She had the small-pox at the age of fourteen; it does not appear whether she were badly marked, but her easy recovery was the cause of great joy and congratulation to her mother. It is difficult for us to realise what a continual and abiding terror the small-pox was to an unvaccinated generation. A girl's prospects—particularly if she were a beauty—were materially affected if she had not taken the disease before coming to a marriageable age, and careful people objected to engaging a servant who had never had it. The virtuous heroine of the novel of the period nursed lover, relative, or enemy through an attack of the small-pox in the same spirit of desperate self-sacrifice in which her modern descendant goes to live at a mission-house in the slums. The precautions taken against infection were childishly inadequate. In one family—not Ellenor's—as the members recovered, one by one, they were sent out for airings in "the chariot," which must ever afterwards

have distributed the disease to every passenger. Inoculation was the only safeguard. One of Ellenor's note-books records, "Inoculation, one in fifty die; natural way, one in six die." But inoculation was sometimes as fatal to life or beauty as the small-pox when accidentally taken, and was, besides, the means of introducing the complaint into neighbourhoods which had hitherto been free from it. In her old age Ellenor writes with much indignation of the conduct of an acquaintance who has chosen to have his little son inoculated at a time when the whole neighbourhood was rejoicing in a clean bill of health. From the same authority we learn another means by which the infection was often spread, which recalls one of Miss Edgeworth's stories: "A young baggage went to have her fortune told by some gipsies full of it, went about with it into almost every house," and in consequence Ellenor decreed that eight or nine persons living "in my lane" should forthwith be inoculated.

But this has led us far from the question of Ellenor's good looks. From the different correspondents of her youth we gather that she was "plump as a Partridge, tender as a Chicking [sic]," that—as is also clear from her own letters—she had "good sense, wit, and humour," that she was "good-natured and obliging," and "had the art of pleasing." With all these good qualities it is not wonderful that she was welcome wherever she went, and that her aunt and uncle were anxious for her company

at any festivity to which they had the *entrée*. Thus it was that "on Saturday the 2nd of February, 1734," she was taken to "the Revels at the Temple." This, as one of her note-books explains, "is a diversion which never happens but when there is a new Lord Chancellor made, and then that Society to which he did belong compliments him with an entertainment, and generaly [sic] a very expensive one (as indeed was this). The company that are allwais invited are the Royal Family, the Lord Chancellor, Judges, and Sergeants of the Inn, Benchers, and Students, the Master of the Temple (which was Dr Sherlock, Bishop of St Asaph), and the Master of the Revels. Every Bencher has the privilege of three tickets to admit ladies, which amounts to about a Hundred, for which there is a Gallery erected wherein we were placed to see the Company dine. The Dinner was brought up by twelve young Gentlemen, in their Gowns, and each Course was usher'd in by Musick; there was a piece of Beef brought in by four men with a large Flagg fix'd in the middle, on which was the Arms of the Society. After dinner was perform'd (by a set of the best actors in Town) the Play called Love for Love, and the Farce of Devil to pay, and to conclude, Singing by Miss Arn.* Then the Lord Chancellor, Judges, and Sergeants, according to the ancient

* Susanna Arne, sister of the composer. In this year she became the wife of Cibber. It was for her that Handel wrote the contralto music of the *Messiah*.

custom, perform'd a Dance round the Coal-Fire call'd the Brawls, and after that retired home, and left the younger set of company to partake of their entertainment."

In these degenerate days even "the younger set" would have decided that a banquet, two plays, and songs were as much entertainment as could be borne in the course of one evening. But no sooner had the seniors gone to bed than "The young Gentlemen came up and chose partners and conducted us down into a fine room where there was two Tables most elegantly Spread with cold things for the Ladies, which after we had partaken of as much as we thought proper, we were led into the Hall, where everybody was well supply'd with fine Wines, Danced as long as they Pleased, and then returned home. Of the Royal Family there was only the Prince of Wales that honoured the Society with their presence."

In the summer of the same year Ellenor was taken by her aunt and uncle to visit Oxford. They left their house in Red Lion Square on a Friday, dined at Uxbridge, and slept at "High Wickham," reaching Oxford on Saturday evening. According to Ellenor's note-book, "Buckinghamshire is a very pleasant Country, fine Hills cover'd with Beech, and the vales so prettily mixt with them that they form Beautyful Gardens, the Thames and other rivers are winding in them, which (if possible) add still to their beauty." The travellers spent nearly

a week in Oxford, and Ellenor went through a course of the most conscientious sight-seeing, besides spending an evening on the river. At the end of her diary she gives a list of "some Curiositys I saw in the Museum," from which one is led to conclude that her cicerone must have been an undergraduate, and that the undergraduates of her time were no better than their modern representatives. "An Egyptian Mummie," "a Rain Deer," "a humming-bird's nest," and other trifles of the same nature were doubtless genuine; but what are we to make of "The Ass that our Saviour rode on," "Moses's Cradle," or the mysterious items, "King Charls and the Bible"?

In the summer of 1736 Ellenor lost her kind aunt. The lady, who had long been in bad health, was much loved and missed by all her family. Ellenor, who was with her at the time of her death, received a letter from Mr. Frere, full of tenderness and distress, informing her that "Your Mamma makes hearty acknowledgements of his Lordship's great goodness in writing to her, though at present she is capable of expressing it only in tears." However, before her husband's letter was finished, Mrs. Frere's emotions were sufficiently under control for her to order her daughter "to send down everything necessary for her dress; but as all cannot be got ready immediately," concludes Mr. Frere, "'tis her desire you would let her have a sute of Night Clothes, Ruffles, and Handkerchief made up,

and a Night Gown unmade by the Carrier next Monday."

His wife's death did not lessen the Lord Chief Baron's kindness to her niece, nor, apparently, did it put an end to Ellenor's excursions. For her sex and the period in which she lived she was a great traveller.

Her account of a visit to Cambridge, some years later, is less interesting than that of her week at Oxford. She considered "King's Chapel excessive grand, and the new buildings every way answerable to it." The Senate House was "quite a neat thing, and the statue of King George the 1st a great addition to it," while Peterhouse Chapel was "sweetly neat." Two years afterwards she went to Norwich and Yarmouth, and was disappointed in both places. Norwich "produced little worthy [of] observation," and the cathedral, "the finest building they have to boast," seemed to her "a good deal heavy." She tantalises the reader by concluding: "The Assizes produced manny and various Diversions but those I shall pass all by in silence." Yarmouth at first pleased her no better. "What they call Coaches, I, vehicles to dislocate one's limbs, which convey'd us about only to conform to the fashion," were not to her taste, and "the place fell vastly short of the idea I had form'd. But I had not long allow'd me to be Cross, for Look, a Man of War appears! Courage, I proclaim'd, and was the 1st that got into the Boat to go and Board her. 'Twas the Torrington,

Captain Edwards Commander. She lay about a League at Sea, and I own I was so agreeably surprised at the Reception we there met, that, had He not shew'd us his Lady's Picture, 'tis odds but that my Heart had been in his Majesty's Service, and was'd about upon the Ocean. How shall I describe him? He appear'd something more than man, and his Behaviour too Fine for me to attempt to delineate. His Person claim'd no part of our Regard, yet still He ravish'd all our Loves and made us his most passionate Admirers. We spent three or four Hours in consummate Joy (with Wines, Chocolate, &c for Repast) and we were so excessively press'd to dine that had the Time permitted I doubt we should have comply'd, tho' I do not see how we could well have justify'd such a Proceeding. We were all a little sick, but Eight or Nine sweet Laced-Coat Officers led us about which greatly relieved the Disorder. He commanded the same Honours to be paid to us which they pay to a crown'd Head, and with his two boats, 12 Oars, and all his Officers attended us on Shore (forbid any money to be taken by the Men), and then with reciprocal good Wishes parted."

Ellenor also did her share of sight-seeing in London. At one time she sees "Kingsington Palace"; at another the Foundling Hospital. Now she is riding in the Lord Mayor's second coach to the "Spital," and dines, sups, and dances at Grocers' Hall; now she is admiring the Painted Hall at

Greenwich or the view from the top of St. Paul's. On a bright day in June she goes to Hampstead to see Lord Tilney's grounds and his house, which "is reckoned to be the largest and most expensive new one in England." A week later she travels to some unspecified place to see "an Elephant which cost £500," and "a famous white bear which was kept in a cage, a very great curiosity." These excursions and amusements continue until she is long past girlhood. It is the common idea that youth passed more quickly in those days, and that an unmarried woman of more than thirty years of age was a hopeless old maid, disqualified from taking part in any diversion. But most of the expeditions here described took place when Ellenor was well over thirty ; and when she was nearing forty we find her at "a grand dinner, supper, and ball for 50 gentlemen and 50 ladies," given in honour of the launch of a ship at Deptford.

It is strange that an only daughter could have spent so much time away from home, but a quaint letter written by her father when she was absent on an excursion down the Thames shows how unselfish and loving were the parents at Thwaite Hall. Mrs. Frere was undergoing a course of physic (which, strange to say, made her worse in health than she had been for some years past), and her husband wrote to give "dear Nelly" an account of the symptoms, and to desire "that no consideration of our domestick concerns may abridge you of one hour

that may contribute either to your benefit or diversion; but, when satiated with pleasure and established in your health, you shall like a retirement to your country Cave, our little Equipage shall be ready to attend you when and wherever you appoint in order to your reception at Thwaite with a sincere welcome, to, dear Nelly, your most affectionate Father." After reading this letter, there is additional pathos in a little red-covered book in which Ellenor has pasted some obituary notices from county newspapers of her father, one-and-twenty years later, and recorded the dates of his last ride on horseback, his last attendance at church, and his last coming downstairs, and his reading of "the smallest print Bible the very morn he was taken with Death."

The excursion which Ellenor was making with a large party of cousins when her father wrote this letter seems to have been the event of her life. Long afterwards, when all the rest had passed away and she was tottering on the verge of the grave, she reverted in a letter to "that Whitsunday, 1745," as a day which she could never forget. Among her papers is one headed, "Written by Order. An exact and true account of every Occurrence that happened to Charley and Mary Udney; William, Ann, and Henry Bankes; Charles and Elizabeth Forman; Rebeccah and Susanna Norton; John Williamson; Jack Ekins; and Ellenor Frere, in a Voyage from London to Rochester and from

Rochester to London in a Vessel called the Mary, Captain Mitchell Commander.

". . . We set out from Thames Street Friday May the 31st, 1745 . . . we got to Gravesend in very good time, bespoke a Supper, and promised to be very jocose, but *mal-à-propos* Henry was indisposed, so that damped our mirth, and we early withdrew to our respective quarters.

" Saturday Morn. We got up, but Henry continuing ill we breakfasted on Shore, so diverted ourselves with seeing men and horses shipped for Flanders. King Charles (for distinction) and the Treasurer went on board a French prize under French and English colours, also a Venetian ship. . . . W. B. left a teaspoon by way of remembrance; Nell made whey for the invalid, and the rest drank punch and ate stuffed beef for their dinner. . . . Threw out the Trawl, toiled all day, but got nothing; William fired off his piece several times at the sea, and dexterously hit it. The King and the Treasurer went out in the boat . . . and brought us home Turbots; those we carried to Quinborough where we lay that night. . . . Bet being somewhat ponderous getting out of the boat, the man dropped her into the water.

" Whitsunday. Got up, dress'd ourselves tolerably neat, left another tea Spoon, went on board, and Nell prepared the Breakfast. Three which shall be nameless play'd at Cards, while a fourth, the Godliest of the Crew (undesign'd) discover'd some little of

attention. Charly and Jack went innocently out to Paddle in the Boat, upon which some unkindly crowded Sail, and used them extremely uncivil; once they resolved to leave us in the lurch, carry away our Coal, and convey themselves to London. The Thought surely was Good; but Nature would break out; Evil for Evil they held not right, so blister'd their Hands, melted their Grease, and boarded us with their wonted Good Humour—D-D Wit *à la mode.* By the help of the King [we] run'd aground" near Sheerness, but they reached Rochester in the afternoon. "The King, Nancy, and Beck civily took away our Boat and treated themselves with a sight of Upnor Castle by Rochester; they laugh'd at us from the shore; we return'd it thro' the Speaking Trumpet, and were most Billingsgately witty. They boarded an old man of war; went into Chatham Yard, and never more return'd to us. We drank Tea above deck, got a boat and row'd for Chatham; there we view'd ships in all their various growths, but more particularly the Royal George, a 1st rate Man of war just finish'd; past by the London, now turn'd into a Chapel on Sundays, there being but one Church; also an Hospital Ship to take in Sick, and the Commissioners' Yatch which lies opposite his house; a sweet situation. Rochester bridge; 11 arches, two fallen into decay; a beautiful thing and most delightful prospects from it. We landed, join'd our deserters, bespoke a supper, took a pleasant walk

about the Castle, and lay at a melancholy antique house which formerly was part of the Castle.

"From Rochester to London.

"Monday morning. Bespoke a quarter of Lamb to be rosted, bought a bushel of Peas, mint, and a Sallet; took a turn about the Town which consists of the long street only; very ordinary; look'd into the Cathedral; likewise bad. E. Forman, R. and S. Norton and E. Frere got abused for being plain; directed where to find the best old Beer; got our Breakfasts, took our Progg, and return'd again to our Vessel; there some shell'd the Peas while others play'd at Cards; M. Udney made the punch, and E. Forman cook'd the dinner. We lay'd the Cloth, and were extremely happy ore [sic] our well Dress'd Peas, when from a quite Dead Calm there sprung up a Gale, and our things soon roll'd off our Table; at first we were mightily pleased, but as the Sea run'd High, the Grin wore off and we put on a change of Faces; we were now short of Sheerness, and 'twas proposed by a Good Natured Man below to put in There, but the Bill was thrown out in the House above us. . . . J. H. beg'd hard for a Reef in the Sail, poor Soul. He was in a terrible funk, and by creeping up the Gang-Way he excluded the Air. . . . There was but one who lent a Hand to the sick."

Then follows a painfully vivid description of the sufferings of the whole party, which might perhaps be admitted into the pages of a realistic novel, but cannot be reproduced here:

"Our fire was soon washed out, for we lay Gun Hole over above Two Hours, and the Ladies set Knee deep in Water above Deck; we were always Rolling from Side to Side, tacking about with the Wind and against the Tide, and with the Tide and against the Wind, and run'd Ten Knots an Hour. At the Nore we sunk our boat, Split our Sail, sprung our Bolt-sprit, broke our Cordage, and had most certainly lost poor Sancho in the Sea had he not surprizingly been saved by the agility of Mr. Ekins. . . . William and his Dog Sancho were very Sick, *terribly Sick, nai damnly Sick* indeed, as the Master by Words, Looks, and Actions express'd it. The Storm lasted above four Hours, and having Rode about 60 or 70 miles by Eleven o'clock at Night, we arrived at Gravesend, our 1st design'd and much wish'd for Haven. Those who had not a dry thread about them went soon to bed, and the whole Family set up to dry the things and kindly to make room to lodge us.

"Tuesday Morning. Lay in bed late, so got late on board by which we lost our Tide, and could get no further than Dagenham Breach, Twelve miles short of London. In our way caught a blubber; Jack play'd us Tunes, and John sung us Songs, and all were very merry. At 12 o'clock we cast Anchor, and the weaker Vessels humbly proposed eating the Lamb that was saved the day before, playing a Game at Cards, and feasting their Eyes

with the pleasant prospects; to stay or not to stay, that was the question. We reason'd pro and con, and the majority wrote Stay, but the King said No, and there was one above the rest for Wisdom famed, so we harken'd to him, and he preach'd passive Obedience. The King said again 'We'll go,' and the rest became occasional conformists. We call'd a Fishing Boat to our Aid, and for sport, William gave the man Sixpence a throw, and got most miraculous Draughts of Fishes. Various were the amusements to the Gentlemen on Shore, such as Angling of Roach, Shooting at Sparrows, and paddling about in a River; Sukey lay on the bed all the time, and when dinner was over we return'd to our Yatch, but being low water went down a pair of Stairs that by the Ladies I dare to affirm will ever be remember'd; there was the fatal Place where Nell so daggled her Fringe that poor James made that heavy complaint 'The higher we go the wetter we grow,' and took a Sweat drying her undergarments. It now Rain'd excessively hard, so we were obliged to keep all below, suffocated with Heat, and almost drown'd in our Cabbin. The Captain would carry us no further than the place where He took us in, and so we lay in the Yatch all Night, where some play'd at Cards and imposed Silence on the Rest, while others reclined on a Watery Bed; Nell was most cursedly Cross, and why? because she could neither Talk, Play, or Kiss. . . . At 6 o'clock we

got two boats Row'd up to Billingsgate, and so ended the Happy Voyage."

It does not seem as if this could have been a very delightful excursion, but to Ellenor it was evidently the one hour which Eve's entreaties extorted for her daughters when she was driven from Paradise. There must have been some one on that "Yatch" who was the man of all men for her; but there is nothing to tell us who he was or why her story had no better ending. Among a bundle of letters is one on which she has written in pencil, "Very silly Rigmarole." It is from Jack Ekins, who was one of the party; and, with much banter and many allusions to incidents of the voyage, it tells her how dull they are without her: "The load at my heart I believe I left behind, as you hint, but left that only to make room for a heavier which my Friends all agree has likewise much affected my Head, which has been very Muzzy and dull ever since the 7th Instant, generally imputed to the absence of a certain agreeable Lady that shall be nameless. You can't imagine how very stupidly we spend our Time, the Husband lolling on his Wife's shoulder, now and then opens his mouth with a 'How d'ye do, Pug?', then a Kiss; 'there, Pig'; then 'What's poor Nelly about?'; the Wife stroking and cuddling the Husband, kisses his Nose, Eyebrows, &c, and crawls over him like a Snail, and breaks the silence with the wonderfull Soliloquy of 'How do you do, my dear Billy?' and poor forlorn Jack sits and bites his

Nails, nay is so very Stupid, don't even Scold, which you know upon occasion he can do. The first week we all went to bed at Nine a'clock for our Condition was unsupportable, and when any Strangers came, call'd in Company to entertain them, as you know is done in some parts of Suffolk. My brother the Parson exclaims bitterly against you, and can't imagine what the D—l you have done to us all."

He then reminds "Coz. Nelly" of her promise to find him a wife in the country, and draws a picture of the qualifications which he expects: "She should have £10,000 down in consideration of which I will settle upon her . . . my own dear self; if she should have any Parents let them be as dutifull as you can; don't let her be dumb, let her Prate, but not be witty lest I should be the subject; not a Beauty, nor yet ugly, let her have good sense with a genteel easy carriage, and her person of the middle size, lest it should be a Woman and her Husband, her Complexion an honest brown, her constitution somewhat amorous, she'll obey the better, let her be kind, good-natured and cheerful, always receiving my Friends as she would myself. . . . There are other trifles requisite which I shall leave to your discretion, but I had like to have forgot one thing, she must let Breakfast be ready to my time in a morning, and never let me wait above five minutes for my Dinner, such a Wife is worth fetching even out of High Suffolk."

It is difficult not to imagine that this portrait was intended for "Nelly" herself—although she was generally reputed witty. Did Mr. Ekins intend to hint what he had not the courage to say openly? or is this no more than the warm affiection and esteem sometimes to be found between two persons of the opposite sex who never dream of a closer tie than friendship? Conjecture is idle; but "L'Hymen, dit-on, craint les petits cousins." His letters, and those from other friends and kinsmen of her youth, were tied by Ellenor in a packet, on which is written in the feeble hand of old age, "Old keepsakes these, and so are all the other bundle of letters, nothing of any business in them, but I loved and esteemed many of the writers, and still love to kiss their hands."

* * *

The curtain falls over her in middle age, and when we catch another glimpse of her it is no longer blithe "Nell," but venerable Mrs. Ellenor who is revealed to us. Father, mother, and brother are all dead, Thwaite Hall is sold, her brother's son is master of the house her brother purchased—Roydon Hall, near Diss—and she, affectionately styled by all the family "our old aunt," is living near him in her own house at Palgrave. Nearly all who could remember her in her gay youth have passed away before her; but she is dear to the younger generations,

who will not allow her to be desolate or lonely. Her letters are full of them and their concerns; be it a birth, a marriage, an election, or the making of a set of shirts, Aunt Ellenor must have a share in it. Her nephew, John Frere, of Roydon, writes: "You say, I treat you more like a Mother than an Aunt—and pray do you wonder at it? if I can feel any satisfaction in cherishing sentiments of that kind, to whom should I direct them but to you, whose care and prudence has, from our earliest infancy, made you, and still continues to make you, truly so to us all?" This letter was tied with others of a like nature from various relatives in a bundle, endorsed on the outside by Mrs. Ellenor, "These the comfort of my *Heart* in old age."

From her letters we may gather how she spent her time. Reading and writing occupied many hours when the weakness of her eyes would permit. Advancing years obliged her to give up riding, but she bought a sedan chair, in which to take the air, for four guineas, and, later on, she acquired "a Chamber Horse"—similar, in all probability, to those interesting machines on which the smiling gentlemen in a well-known advertisement enjoy horse exercise in their own bedrooms. She sometimes took exercise in her garden: a note in the fly-leaf of one of her little books tells us that "eleven times round my Garden is a compleat mile." Inside the same book is the following verse, whether her own

composition or borrowed from another source does not appear:

> "If e'er the book on which you look
> Be stolen, lent, or lost,
> Pray bring it me, for I am she
> That once paid what it cost."

She was a notable housewife. A large sheet of paper is endorsed, in her writing, "Things to be thought about, look for within." Among the memoranda are such items as these:

"Put up Bacon in the increase of the Moon late in February or early in March.

"Bespeak a Goose always for old Michaelmas Day.

"Make mince pie meat before the 12th of November, and a Servants' Cake.

"When the Snow lies on the House on the fore part of it, be sure to have it swept before bedtime.

"When you wash the little parlour draw-up Curtains, do it in water that Sheep have been washed in, and use no sope.

"Gather Centory when it 1st begins to shew all its red buds before they blow out.

"Late in June smoke the best chamber with Tobacco and everything in it."

She kept a little book in which she carefully recorded the days in each year on which she began and ceased to light fires in her establishment. She observed the weather with great interest, and noted

down such events as the terrible frost of the winter of 1794—1795, when the snow began to fall on the night of December 24th and lasted till February 8th, going away with "a most violent and destructive Flood." In the same year, before harvest, wheat was sold "at £3. 10s a Comb, and more was asked, and before September was out, it was to be bought for a Guinea. Prodigious was the crops of every grain to restore plenty to an ungrateful people."

She also kept a list of her servants, with the dates on which they came to her and left her, and the amount of their wages, which varied from £5 a year to one of the maids, to fourteen guineas paid to a manservant. Over the top of her table of wages is the note, "The great-coats to be bought only when I please." One entry reads quaintly: "May 25th 1777, Trinity Sunday. Frances Partridge came out with the small-pox and was nursed in my wash-house chamber." The nursing proved effectual, for two years later Frances Partridge is mentioned as "married from my house"; and a similar entry is often repeated in the case of other servants, which looks as if Mrs. Ellenor were a good and indulgent mistress. She has recorded that the loss of a certain Elizabeth Sydal, who "married from me," was "a grief to me," but otherwise she expresses no opinions.

Washing-day—that season of trial to all establishments where a laundry is maintained on the premises—came once in eight weeks. This seems somewhat

infrequent, but there must be persons still living who can remember old-fashioned establishments in Wales at the beginning of the last century where washing-day came but twice a year. All soiled linen was flung into a great cupboard, which was opened once in six months, when the males of the household were expected to keep out of the way for a week or so, while the women lived in an atmosphere of soap and starch, and snatched occasional mouthfuls of cold food as best they might. Mrs. Ellenor's washing-day was sufficiently disturbing for her to decline entertaining fourteen of her relatives at dinner while it lasted.

Her neatness was admirable. Her notes and letters were generally kept in pockets made by her from brown paper, and fastened by pieces of ribbon. She carries tidiness to an extreme by making a little case from a piece of vellum, on which some old deed had once been written, in order to hold a scrap of paper on which she has noted some information about the parentage of the Graces and the Muses. Her dimness of sight, thin paper, and bad ink have combined to make some of her letters hard to read, but her writing on the stiff paper of her note-books is beautifully clear.

She was a wise and kind friend to the poor, sometimes acting as her nephew's almoner, and writing to tell him of the welfare of their *protégés*. She was always ready to concern herself for others, and one of her letters gives an amusing description

of her efforts to bring about a good understanding between a husband and wife. As far as can be made out from an involved and unpunctuated story, the wife had become estranged from her husband, and begged for counsel from Mrs. Ellenor—"a person now quite unqualified to give sentiments even on less material subjects," in her own opinion. However, the old lady proved herself equal to the occasion, and gently insinuated with regard to the wife "having visited about for a time" that "the kind treatment and consolatory thoughts of real friends were surely great comforts in affliction, and a little transient view of the world a little entertainment, but solid happiness could only be found within the walls of one's own house." She then dwelt upon the husband's virtues, and, as she writes to her niece, "hoped those drops would a little sweeten some bitter ones which in this state of trial in some shape or other is judged proper for every individual."

She was flattered when a young lover made her his confidante in his difficulties, and rejoiced when the lady's father, who began by packing his daughter off to Yarmouth to be out of the way of her suitor, was brought to reason. The "lump of rich cake" with which the newly married pair complimented her was evidently a welcome gift, and she has entered the wedding among the important occurrences of the year 1800. On the same page of the book is noted, "February the 26th, 1797, the Bank of England and all private banks suspended the issuing

Cash by order of the Privy Council for a time." According to Mrs. Ellenor, the chief events worthy of remembrance in the year 1793 were, "Louis of France beheaded January the 21st," "The Queen of France beheaded October the 16th," and "Mr. Edward Frere's dreadful fall of [sic] the corn sack, June the 5th." She must have lacked the sense of proportion as grievously as the compiler of a calendar for the year 1900, which notes, on January 22nd "Sir I. Pitman died, 1897," and on January 23rd "William Pitt died, 1806."

Although unable to take part in any of the gaieties to which she had been so much attached, she enjoyed hearing of them, and was as disappointed as any miss in her teens when "the Grand Assembly" in a neighbouring town was "but a very poor one," "neither Dutches [sic], nor Frere, nor Chevilier, Maynard, nor any great personages there." Her letters are full of gossip about her neighbours, generally of a kind and friendly sort. She dearly loved a little scandal. One of her little note-books contains some stories about several county families which are more curious than edifying, although her omission to date most of them leaves an ignorant reader in doubt as to whether the persons mentioned were her own contemporaries or belonged, like Methuselah and Julius Cæsar, to some remote period of history.

"I have scratch'd till both pen and guider are quite tired," she tells her niece; "but a pack of

dam lies (your brother will say) will revive them again and make them fly with swiftness. Admiral Wilson was at Bodesdale Fair, ascention day. He has twice been sent for, post, to see Mr. H—— in his last moments; he is one day dying, and the next riding to Diss, and next week Sir and Madam going to London, as the Admiral told Mr. Catchpole at the fair. 'Tis said that this expedition is to sell 8 hundred a year to pay off large debts. I dare not say the truth of the £800 being gospel, but the following is—that Sir kept his room, but that day Madam had neither gone in, or sent to enquire after him, [and she] had much company to dine there, and at dinner-time he asked his man what time dinner was to be ready that day, for he had not been told. The servant answer'd 'They are now at dinner, Sir.' He swore most dreadfully, and order'd his man to give him his stilts, tore down, and 1st damn'd his wife most dreadfully, and that done, ended with 'Damn you all,' upon which they all order'd their carriages and horses and left the Hall directly. This received from such hands as I can depend upon."

She was troubled with many infirmities. Her eyes had never been strong, and her increasing deafness was painful and troublesome, not only from its inconvenience, but from the noises in her head which accompanied it. Her family insisted upon her having a companion, an attention with which Mrs. Ellenor, like many other old ladies, would willingly have

dispensed. After many failures, one was brought to her from East Dereham, and Mrs. Ellenor, while professing to think herself "extremely well off," had much to say of the shortcomings of the new arrival; "reads so so, but 'tis not her hobby-horse, loving to go full trot, I suppose, fears meeting some hard stumbling places in the road, so declines the undertaking as much as possible . . . is not foolish, I believe, in many things, could say A, but lest B should be required sits upon her chair from morn till eve with snuff in her fingers, stuffing up close the two air holes." Mrs. Ellenor ends with the assurance, "I flatter myself that by degrees I shall put all her members in motion, and shall never more want to plague my friends to procure me another Companion." This hope was not realised. There is a sheet of paper with a long string of names headed, "Alphabetical list of companions."

It was then the fashion for ladies to keep pets, and one of Mrs. Ellenor's acquaintance is described as travelling with a dog, a cat, a parrot, and a squirrel. Mrs. Ellenor yielded to custom so far as to keep a linnet and a nightingale. The latter died, and its place was taken by a canary, the gift of her niece, which was evidently as great a treasure as the "new brass watch, cost 4 Guineys," which came from London, and is also entered in a note-book.

She followed the course of public events with an interest that was sometimes too keen for her peace of mind, as on one occasion when, "to fright fools,

and myself one of them, our wicked people from Diss declared it for a truth (with *great concern*) that on such a night London was set on fire in ten several places. I shaked at hearing it," adds the poor old lady.

One of the public events in which she seems to have taken most interest was the restoration to sanity of George III. in 1789. One of her brown paper bags contains leaflets and cuttings from the newspapers which have reference to it. There is the prayer to be used "during His Majesty's present indisposition," and the form of thanksgiving for his recovery. There is a copy of the Bury and Norwich *Post* for Wednesday, April 29th, with a long account of the king's state visit to St. Paul's to return thanks. From the London correspondent of this paper we learn that the Speaker in his robes set out from Palace Yard at a quarter to eight, and was followed by the Lord Chancellor, accompanied by "all the lords in coaches, the youngest baron going first, and the Duke of Norfolk bringing up the rear." "The female nobility, gentry, and others" were sent along Holborn, and set down at Cannon Alley. After the House of Lords came the Dukes of Cumberland, Gloucester, and York, with their suites. "The Gentlemen of the Artillery Company with the Pioneers, and a party of the Toxophylites, or ancient Archers, dressed in green coats and feathers, with bows and quivers at their backs, marched immediately before the Prince of Wales, whose equipages were the most

splendid ever exhibited. In the first coach, with his attendants, were six of the most beautiful black horses ever seen, richly caparisoned; the postillion in a tight jacket of gold, and a cap [sic] the same; the horses prancing in a most elegant manner." Their majesties, drawn in a coach with eight horses, and attended by the elder princesses in their carriages, arrived, between eleven and twelve, at Temple Bar, where they were received by the Lord Mayor, who presented the city sword. The Lord Mayor's horse "was conspicuous from its supporters; two of the city militia walked on each side, holding the bridle with one hand, and, with a saving caution, holding the other over his lordship's legs, it is supposed, in order to correct any accident that might disturb the equipoise of the body.

"Many ladies sat up all night, and those who did not, were under the necessity of rising at the *unfashionable* hour of four in the morning. . . . The morning was rather unfavourable, and much diversion was afforded to those already in their situations, to see the ladies, without hats or caps, running along in the mud to take their places." The price of seats fell at the last moment, and "those for which two guineas were asked, were let for 5s."

The festivities were prolonged through the summer. In June the foreign embassies gave *fêtes* to the Royal Family. The first was at the house of the French ambassador in Portman Square, to which about nine hundred cards of invitation were issued.

The queen arrived at half-past nine, and was entertained with ballets by dancers from the opera. She was afterwards handed by the ambassador, "none of Her Majesty's own sons being then in attendance, to the tea-room, through an arbour of trees, decorated with a transparency of the sun." The princes behaved with their usual bad taste and bad feeling, for when at half-past ten "many of the company stood up to dance country dances, none of their Royal Highnesses thinking proper to come forward to dance, their Royal sisters condescended to accept the hands of some of the nobility." The dances continued till near one o'clock, when "the supper-rooms were opened, and displayed a scene of luxury and magnificence scarcely to be described."

This *fête* was surpassed by one given in the Rotunda at Ranelagh by the Marquis del Campo, which cost the Court of Spain about £12,000. "When the Queen came in, there was very little light in the room, but on her appearance, by touching some of the lamps, the whole lighted up instantaneously, and had the effect of *being the consequence of her appearance.*" After dances and fireworks came a lottery, "which was something quite new and *supremely gallant*, for it was *only for the ladies*, and there was *not a single blank.*" One is glad to know that the queen and princesses took their chance in the lottery, not being particularly successful. Supper was served in the boxes, the Marquis del Campo himself carving for the queen. "There were

about 15 dishes on every table, several removes, a profusion of ices, strawberries and cherries, and peaches at *four guineas a dozen.*"

Among the newspaper cuttings is a slip of paper on which Mrs. Ellenor, after reading of all these great doings, has proudly written: "Pray let me boast of Palgrave's loyal Joy, tho' little in your eyes, magnificent in ours. . . . Every man, woman, and child a bellyful of ale, and plenty of plumb-pudding," and "2 Barrels of good ale given in the same manner," "a dinner provided for the gentlemen and farmers at the Swan. The bells ushered in the day, with flags streaming in the air, while the commonallity stuff'd, french horns, flutes and scrape-guts charm'd their ears, and Madam Frere's carriage stood on the green to see and hear the various Joys exhibited on the merciful occasion."

Another cause of excitement to Mrs. Ellenor and all her neighbours came in the following year, 1798, when a French invasion was daily expected. We who remember such a calamity being regarded as within the bounds of possibility only a little while ago, cannot deride their fears. The spirit shown by the whole country was admirable, and even the usually sluggish East Anglians were stirred to warlike ardour. Body after body of volunteers was raised, equipped, and drilled, and keen was the rivalry between the corps belonging to different towns. John Frere was the captain of the Diss volunteers, and his sons were as ready as he to serve their

country, to the joy and pride of the old aunt, who displayed as undaunted a spirit as any of them.

"My dear nephew," she wrote to John Frere, "Mrs. Maynard on Sunday came and set some time with me. She fears not the French, she says, nor never will, but your face, she says, [is] longer than her arm. Your Diss company increases dayly—84 I hear are enter'd and dayly more pressing in. Mr. Palgrave said he could not spare his men, but has got a substitute and clothed him. My James goes every night for a fortnight or three weeks, and after that three nights in a week, and his uniform is just finish'd, fit to appear before you to obey your orders. Everybody in our parish (save the Methodists) have sign'd to be faithful to government and do to their utmost what ever shall be directed them to do. Lady Fenn is amazed at my serenity these dreadful times, and I am not less amazed at her timidity. I trust in providence for present and future safetys; if money will keep the disturbers of our peace from setting foot on English ground they are welcome to my part. ('What ALL?' No, I cannot part with *that*—but if I must—&c—), and if I can but get enough to supply their 12 months' demands I will not (like old Euclio) *sigh*, but give it for the public good with pleasure. Mr. Waith is Captain of the Eye Volunteers, and old Madam says 'tis the 1st nail in her coffin and is vastly angry. They come on prodidious fast, and he is said to make a fine figure and does his work to

perfection. They are going to get from London a master of the whole affair to come down to make them outshine the neighbouring pretenders, 'tis said that without such a guide *poor* Diss will truly cut but a very ordinary appearance. . . . This moment Ned Frost come in. . . . they have got their 62, are to work hard, for a General is coming in a week or two to review them."

The Diss volunteers worked hard at their drill, and proved themselves worthy of the colours which were presented to them by their captain's wife. A pocket in one of Mrs. Ellenor's note-books contains a pen-and-ink sketch of the design on the colours—the pillar of state founded upon the rock of the constitution, and surmounted by the crown, flanked on one side by a cannon and on the other by the arms of Diss. With it is a cutting from a local paper which gives an account of the ceremony:

"On Saturday last the colours were presented to the Diss Volunteer Corps, by Mrs. Frere, their Captain's lady, with a very neat and elegant Speech. The allusion in her speech to the design on the colours . . . we thought was very impressive. The address of Captain Frere (which was of considerable length) was argumentative and convincing. . . . After the presentation of the Colours, the Corps attended divine service; the sermon, preached by Mr. Manning the Rector of the parish, was the kind affectionate and pious exhortation of the Pastor to his flock—it seemed to us like the admonitions

and encouragements of a Patriarch of old to his numerous descendants, armed for the common defence of their country.

"The various evolutions exhibited by the Corps were in general well executed, and prove that the attention of the Corps has kept pace with the great pains their Officers have taken with them. After the evolutions were over, the Corps were treated with an excellent dinner and wine, at the King's Head, by their Captain. The company was more numerous and respectable than we ever remember to have seen on any other occasion."

Not very long ago there passed away an old man who remembered in his youth to have seen "Captain Frere" haranguing his volunteers "by Diss pump as is now"; but all that he could remember of his lengthy and argumentative speech was the phrase, "Gentlemen, I'm an old man, but a young soldier." Mrs. Ellenor's letters do not make it clear whether she was able to be present on this interesting occasion, but she keenly enjoyed talking of it to all who paid their respects to her during that season.

A still more delightful event in her eyes was the return of her nephew, John Frere, as one of the members for Norwich in the year before her death. Why a staid, elderly man who had never before attempted Parliamentary life should suddenly take it into his head to become a candidate it is hard to explain; perhaps he may have been incited thereto by his eldest son, the celebrated John

Hookham Frere, who had for some years represented West Looe. But the Cornish election was a very different thing. It is said that J. H. Frere was never at West Looe in his life until he passed through it on his way to the Continent, and that he did not realise where he was until the inhabitants set the bells ringing in honour of their member. The Norwich election proved a severe contest, and although it ended in a victory for Mr. Wyndham and his colleague, Mr. Frere, there were many days and nights of anxiety, as well as many hours of hard work for zealous Tories. In order to prevent the drunkenness which was one of the worst features of an election, the rival candidates agreed not to throw open the public-houses for so many days beforehand as was generally the custom. In making this virtuous and economical resolution they reckoned without the Norwich brewers, who threatened to run a candidate of their own if their business were made to suffer in this way. Accordingly the public-houses were perforce opened, and the free and independent electors, having to make up for lost time, availed themselves of their opportunities to such an extent that this election was afterwards remembered as one of the worst, in the matter of drunkenness, that had ever disgraced the city.

Mr. Frere was not a good electioneer, and is said to have owed his success to his seven handsome sons, who canvassed for him. Mrs. Ellenor, in one of her letters, alludes jokingly to the havoc made

by "the kill-heart youths," as she styles them. According to her, a young lady who had been disappointed of dancing with one of them could not eat or sleep for mortification. A story has long been handed down in the family that one of these young men in his rounds called upon a proud mother and insisted upon taking her infant in his arms. After dandling it for a few minutes he thought that he had done enough for his father's cause, and put it down with a careless "Run away to mother!" whereupon the luckless baby, being only in long clothes, fell flat upon its face.

The election was over and the news of victory sent to Mrs. Ellenor, who had been most active in rendering what services she could. Perhaps she thought of the time, long ago, when one of those cousins who was with her on board the "Yatch" was engaged in electioneering, and wrote to her to complain of the general dislike to "a certain illustrious house that shall be nameless." Sixty years had passed, and the danger was not from Jacobites, but from Jacobins.

Her delight was genuine and unrestrained. "Dear Niece," she wrote to Lady Fenn, "my hand shakes —not from *liquor*, but from inward *Joy*. The civilities and congratulatory Compliments sent to me near home, and the country round make me *almost* fancy myself a person of some consequence, but my own failings of abilities in body and mind say as friends 'Know thyself, and be not lifted up,

and be thankful for the poor remains, knowing they are more than thousands share more deserving.' Pray say for me to Mr. Frere, &c, &c, all what I would wish to say upon *merit's reward.* Do pray be a Moses and Aaron, for to you, tis *given.* Shine for me now, and I'll say 'My dear, I thank you.' I really for more than a week have lived in such a worry from messages, sending miles about where I could be of any service to the cause (Mr. Wiseman being the orderer), that I am even upon that account not sorry that all is over—all well—all in safety. My fears in those respects were very great indeed. Thank God for all His mercies to the Frere family, He has ever dealt with a liberal hand, who can deny it? Mr. Wiseman's anxiety, continual head work, tail-bumping, treating, &c, &c, exceeds my powers of description. He came to comfort me almost daily; I adore him. . . . Mrs. Wiseman too has been so civil to me that it is marvellous in my eyes.

". . . James coming from Norwich the moment all was given up by Mr. Fellows, set off for to bring me word, came all alone, and had he not been mounted on a tall able horse I suppose would have been beaten to death. He rode through near a hundred of the blue rabble, they pelting him with great stones, bricks' ends, mire, and lumps of wetted clay, got across the road with bludgeons in their hands crying out 'Stop him! Down him! Kill him!' But he *rode* for *life*, and never in his life was so frightened before.

"I set up the bells directly, and they were rung till near 12, and most of yesterday, though I paid them off and begged to have them save their money, for I really am so deaf now again that I could not hear them."

Near Mrs. Ellenor's house was a boys' school, with the inmates of which she had previously had a quarrel. As far as can be traced from allusions in one of her letters, the boys were in the habit of disturbing her by making a noise in their playground at unseasonable hours, and by keeping rabbits. The annoyance reached such a pitch that her nephew was obliged to interfere. The parents of some of the worst offenders were summoned, one boy left the school, the rest were severely reprimanded, and the rabbits were sentenced to death or banishment from the premises. But all unkindnesses were now forgotten, and the boys might make as much noise as they pleased, in the security that Mrs. Ellenor would enjoy it.

"The 20 boy neighbours hollow'd the whole day, so I went down to Diss and bought 3 or 4 pounds of sugar cakes and gingerbread, had them all come in with the housekeeper and the usher (some of them being quite babes) so they fill'd the hall after 5 o'clock. I step'd just in, and made my speech, tho' I could not hear their answers. When they had eaten to content, James and George gave them two glasses of wine apiece"—a liberal allowance for "babes." "Then they shouted thanks, went into

the fore court, took hands in a ring, pul'd of their hats, and exalt 'em in the air, [and] shouted 3 times to admiration."

Nor was this all the pleasure in store for her. "Next Saturday Mr. Frere's Company from Diss, Mr. Wiseman tells me, shall all come and give me a great firing, so I have sent for the Cask of Nog and cakes, as when you saw the entertainment. I expect Miss Riches here presently. Mrs. Malkin yesterday, Mr. and Miss Isaacson to-morrow—&c—&c—in short, I wish for no more, as I hear so bad, only I am assured that your brother and my-long-wished-for-to-see Welsh Edward* call upon me in their way to Ipswich; it fills my heart with joy. . . . Miss F. and Miss B. this moment come in, and 50 purple and oranges passing my window—continual calls from every quarter—worries me." So ends the happy but distracted aunt.

Persons of extreme views would hardly approve of the old lady's expedition to church next Sunday with a large purple and orange cockade pinned over her heart, to receive the congratulations of the congregation; but it was a joy to her almost as great as the visit from the "sweet youths," her great-nephews, or the performance of the Diss volunteers on her lawn. Their music, having a liberal accompaniment from the big drum, was audible to her, and made her, as she declared, feel

* John Frere's second son, afterwards the father of Sir Bartle Frere.

quite young again, although she was but a "withered stump." The cakes were handed round, an admiring crowd assembled, the "Nog" (strong Norfolk ale) was broached, and the heads of the band probably buzzed for the rest of the day.

The last year of Mrs. Ellenor's life was one of failing strength and abilities, brightened by the love of those about her. She declined to make new acquaintances, but old friends and relatives of all ages were sure of a welcome at Palgrave. How valued by her was the affection of the rising generation is shown over and over again in her letters. To her nephew John's wife she writes: "If I may measure your affection by the attention ever shew'd to me present and absent—to borrow your own expression, 'it would be even as great as I could wish it.' Permit me to indulge the pleasing dream, and till I am awaked by unwished for real lessons to convince me that it is only imagination and vanity, I will doze on—love, and think that I am beloved." She then repays the anxiety of her nephew for her health by a little good advice about his own:

"To take *more* morning sleep in bed—and *less* when up; to take short walks; and not long rides or strong exercise; not to involve himself so much in other people's affairs, but keep his mind less harassed, which I earnestly recommend; and as earnestly request that he will never (these knock-down days) walk the streets when dark without

a servant at his heels, not for state, but for safety. And now, my dear, I hear *you* say 'Thankey, Aunt,' and hear *him* pish, &c. And now he may hear *me* say 'Aye, scold on if you will, and if you swear, I am out of the reach of feeling your resentment, and if you were near, I could not hear you.' And if you say 'What do [sic] this babbler mean?' I'll say 'Sir, I'll add one more ingredient for the benefit of your health—drink daily a little port and less water—remember you are on the confines of 53."

Her letters to her nephews and great-nephews are full of such affectionate banter: "Your begging paper has not yet been read, and when it is, you know I am deaf in both ears, and should I give a *tiny* piece of yellow money, 'twill be more out of pride than charity." Another is derided for having fallen off his horse into the mire on his way between Roydon and Palgrave. In her great-nieces she took less interest; she was sorry to hear that the married one was so poor a creature as "to feel from wind and changes of weather" so early in life, and the other is scarcely mentioned. "Nell" had evidently preferred the society of the opposite sex, and age had not changed Mrs. Ellenor in this respect.

There is a blurred letter in a very shaky hand, giving "my dear nephew" "ten thousand thanks for an unexpected congratulation on the arrival of my 88th year; it came from the heart, I verily believe, of an affectionate nephew, so consequently

gave pleasure to an affectionate old aunt." She was anxious for the safety of his son, who had just been sent to the Peninsula on a diplomatic mission: "Let me 1st ask where is J. H. F.? Day and night he is in my dreams and thoughts; where is he? Not on the water, I hope, these alarming winds. Time was when Jimmy over the water was always drunk; I wish that now I could drink J. H. F. over the water in safety."

A little while later John Frere writes to this son in Lisbon to announce the death of "my old aunt," the somewhat complicated arrangements of whose will did not give him entire satisfaction.

So ends her story—and it is not very much of a story, after all. Her name was unknown beyond her own neighbourhood; she enjoyed her books without attempting to dabble in literature, and relieved the poor in the seasons of distress occasioned by the great war, without a thought of coming before the public as a philanthropist. She stayed at home, wrought much, loved much—and there is the end. She had neither career nor mission; perhaps she was not even conscious of "holding views," although she had at all times the courage of her opinions. She lived in days when neither the learning of Mrs. Carter nor the piety of Mrs. More could quite efface the reproach of spinsterhood; yet there is nothing to show that she pitied herself or ever felt herself to be otherwise than useful, happy, and beloved.

* * *

From the aunt we may now turn to say a few words of her niece and namesake—the "dear Lady Fenn," to whom most of her letters are addressed. The second Ellenor Frere was born in 1744. There is little known of her in youth, except that she was always "of strong original understanding and great accomplishment." She married a neighbour, John Fenn, the antiquary, who has acquired celebrity as the first editor of the Paston letters. It is much to be hoped that various autobiographical fragments left by this gentleman, and now in the hands of different possessors, may be some day given to the world; they give an amusing picture of an excellent but priggish worthy who never, even in the heyday of youth, was guilty of the least dereliction from the path of strict virtue and unexceptionable deportment. His amusement as a small child was to colour the shields of arms in a copy of Gwillym's *Heraldry* according to the rules; and he kept a strict account of all his expenses at school and college, even including sixpence for an emetic—entered by him under its old-fashioned title of a "vomit."

Mrs. Ellenor Frere was evidently held in much esteem by the Fenns. When Sir John received the honour of knighthood from George III. he wrote to announce it to his wife's aunt before sending the news to his wife. Either on this occasion or on another, Sir John presented the king with two volumes of the originals of the Paston letters. For many years they were not to be found in the library

at Windsor, and it was even hinted by sceptics that these celebrated documents were a forgery, and that their disappearance was convenient. However, some years ago they suddenly came to light—sad to say, in an episcopal library.

When Sir John died, Mrs. Ellenor pasted his obituary notice in the little book which she reserved for such tributes to really valued kinsmen and friends by way of showing her esteem, and Lady Fenn gave herself up to good works. Having no children of her own, she naturally considered that she was peculiarly qualified to instruct those of other people, and she soon set to work to provide them with instruction and amusement. There was a great need of children's books in her time; we have gone to the other extreme, and those who know the floods of sugared milk and water which are poured forth for the rising generation every Christmas may not realise what very unwholesome diet was provided for their predecessors until a few good women took the matter in hand. For instance, the very particular mother in Miss Edgeworth's *Mademoiselle Panache*, although she hesitates to let her little girls read *Gil Blas*, acknowledges that it is commonly given to young children who are learning French. Female authorship was then so terrible a thing that some of the most successful writers for children dared not reveal their names. Miss Dorothy Kilner, to whom we owe so many excellent stories—*Jemima Placid*, *The History of a Pincushion*, *The Village School*,

and others—wrote to her dying day as "Mary Pelham"; Lady Fenn was "Mrs. Lovechild" or "Mrs. Teachwell." Her little books were first written for her brother's family at Roydon, and the little masters and misses who appear in them bear the names of the little Freres. An old gardener well remembered seeing her sitting on the lawn at five o'clock on a summer morning, her portfolio on her knee, carefully printing the words, letter by letter, with her pen, for the sake of the children who were not old enough to read written characters. She then bound the tiny volumes in gaily coloured paper.

Her greatest achievement was the *Cobwebs to Catch Flies*—a progressive reading-book, containing not detached words and sentences, but real stories, in words first of three letters, then of four, and then of five. It outlived her time as an educational work, and went through many editions until it was quite modernised in appearance, the long *ſ* being replaced by "s," and the old-fashioned cuts exchanged for other and less interesting pictures. The chief point that impresses itself upon an adult reader of to-day is that the children incessantly exclaim "O me!" whether as a genteel variant of "Oh my!" or because it was difficult to find an ejaculation with the requisite number of letters.

With all her affection for children Lady Fenn was a stern disciplinarian. "My great-niece would be a delightful little creature indeed," says one of

her letters, "if she were not suffered to utter impatient shrieks—of which she might soon be cured—she never did it with me—and we passed pleasant hours *tête-à-tête* before breakfast."

She had a great reputation for intellect. Some remarks of hers upon *The Castle of Otranto* brought her a letter from Horace Walpole, a copy of which is among her papers. The first part is written in an unformed childish hand, as neat and clear as print, between margins ruled in pencil, as if one of her little pupils had been trusted to copy it. Would that the education which is now becoming a universal *gêne* taught our young people to write half as well! But the greatest tribute to her talents was rendered by a boy of her own village of East Dereham, who thus explained to his playmates the dangers of an invasion from Buonaparte: "I tell ye, ye don't know what a terrible fellow he is; why, he don't care for nobody. If he was to come here to Dereham he wouldn't care that" (with a snap of his fingers), "no! not even for Lady Fenn there."

Mrs. Ellenor sincerely admired her niece's cleverness, but could not help being a little pleased when Lady Fenn was more alarmed than herself at the prospect of a French landing. Dereham was near the coast, and therefore more liable to attack than Palgrave, and poor Lady Fenn confessed that she could do nothing "without reflecting upon Invasion." She even brought away two pictures from her house, in case "the Monster" should burn it, although at

the same time she declared, "I do not disquiet myself with apprehension."

An even more terrible danger to England than Napoleon's forces—although comparatively few were able to realise it—was the condition of the lower classes in the rural districts towards the end of the eighteenth century. Untaught, neglected by squire and parson, if there were either in the neighbourhood; ground down by the farmers, who opposed every attempt at reform for fear it should increase the rates—in many places they were no better than savages. The Church, under the fostering care of a succession of monarchs whose only qualification to reign was their nominal adherence to a Protestant form of belief, made no effort to rescue the souls in her charge. Speaking generally, the only missionary work was done by the Wesleyans. Here and there such an exemplary clergyman as that depicted in Miss Kilner's *Village School*, who walked about his parish in gown and bands, and allowed good children to play in his field, might produce a different state of things; but those who wish to know the utter darkness, spiritual and mental, in which the labouring classes lived and died under "good King George," may turn to Hannah More's account of her own and her sisters' labours at Cheddar and among the Mendip Hills. In 1790 Somersetshire farmers would not hear of a resident clergyman, for fear that the tithes should be raised, and because "the country had never prospered since religion

was brought in by the monks of Glastonbury." Somersetshire villagers believed that so many years' attendance at the schools would give "the ladies" a right to sell their children for slaves. The only Bible in one parish was used to prop a flower-pot. In another place, not one out of one hundred and eight children could tell who made them. The sick were left unvisited by the clergy, and the dead were often buried without a service.

If it be objected that these remote parts of Somersetshire were hardly fair examples to take, what can be said for Brentford, near Ealing, where Mrs. Trimmer at this time was attempting to set up Sunday-schools? "The children ran about from morning to night, ragged, dirty, and regular pests to all the inhabitants." Of religious knowledge there was not a vestige, although the boys could generally read. Petty robberies and thefts were perpetually committed, and horrible cruelty to animals was so universal a characteristic that one of Mrs. Trimmer's first proceedings was to write a story inveighing against it, in the method beloved of Mr. Barlow, who had always a "short anecdote" to point out the disadvantages of every bad habit.

As has been the case with nearly every social or religious reform, the good work was first undertaken by a few who were under no obligation to do anything at all, and might well have left the matter alone without incurring any reproach. The

horrors of the French Revolution, while they made thoughtful persons anxious to do something for the improvement of the lower classes, had inspired the majority with the idea that the people must be "kept down." On the one hand the workers were accused of being "Methodists"; on the other, of being "Jacobins." So intolerable was the persecution of the Mores that it drove them from their house at Cowslip Green.

Lady Fenn, living in a neighbourhood where she and her family had been well known for many years, was apparently unhurt by such annoyances, her chief cause of complaint being the selfish apathy of the richer classes. Incited thereto by Mrs. Trimmer's little book, *The Economy of Charity*, which showed how industrial work might be started in schools, Lady Fenn tried to do something for the education of the Dereham children. There were already Sunday-schools established in the village, which gave her the opportunity of knowing the children individually. Her desire was to stir up "a spirit of industry and neatness among the girls," but she found great difficulty in procuring any employment for them that could be made profitable. At last she introduced a new industry—the spinning of tow, which prospered, although it was hampered in the beginning by the large "plant" required. Some of her friends were very good in offering subscriptions, which she would not directly ask, although she took care to make her scheme generally

known; others discouraged her efforts, from a fear that if women were taught to earn a maintenance in any way but by domestic service, the supply of maidservants would fail.

A school where the girls were taught to mend and patch clothes was another most useful institution. Here the besetting difficulty was the scarcity of materials. "Were I in London with all my Country activity about me," wrote Lady Fenn to a cousin, "I would ransack every little shop for fags and remnants—apply to every mantua-maker for snips."

By way of example, Lady Fenn learned to spin, and was soon wishing that her "diamond earrings were transformed—one into a nice upright parlour-wheel—and one into a Toy-wheel to set on a table." In defiance of political economy, she was anxious to earn funds for her charitable schemes by her own exertions, and lamented that "I have yet no leisure to earn myself—being so engaged in stimulating others to do it—making estimates of earnings and savings—and instigating poor persons to purchase clothes and linen, rather than to lay out every thing in food and drink." It was far better for her to be employed in this way, could she but have thought it; but the fashion of intercepting some of Peter's just profits in order to relieve the necessities of Paul is always dear to the feminine heart, and has not yet been abolished by higher education.

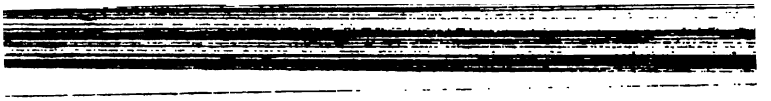
She was on the watch for new openings. "I

would give anything to have been in Scotland with a lady whom I met the other day, She had learned the whole process of linen manufactory [sic]; it would now be of infinite use to me, as I will not relinquish the hope that the gentlemen may adopt this scheme in time, and carry it on, on a more extensive plan. I want a pleasing agreeable woman —who can speak fluently and well—to harangue on the benefit of employment for the poor."

In such schemes for the general benefit Lady Fenn passed her long and useful life, dying in 1813. George Borrow describes how, in his childhood, he used to see her awesome figure stalking through East Dereham on charitable errands, with her footman in attendance. She might have walked straight out of the pages of one of the story-books of the period.

On the whole she is less lovable and a less interesting figure than her aunt. We seek vainly in her letters for the raciness and geniality abounding in those of Mrs. Ellenor; she is more didactic, and fully conscious of setting a good example to those about her. But she did good work in a quiet, unobtrusive way, and was greatly missed by high and low when she died. *Cobwebs to Catch Flies* are now as obsolete as the spinning-wheel itself, and the elaborate *Game of Grammar*, which was supposed to be her masterpiece in the way of combining instruction with amusement, would be utterly scouted by the rising generation.

But the good work done by the devoted few, who gave up ease and luxury and braved the opinion of the world for the sake of those who could never repay them in any way, has grown and extended farther than they can have imagined in their most hopeful dreams.



CONCLUSION.

MERE "samples of womankind" are they all; "but here they be." It may be objected that in the chapter devoted to the Pitt family there is little feminine interest, Governor Pitt's strongly marked personality completely eclipsing those of his wife and daughter-in-law. The excuse is that he was intended to give an example of what a woman occasionally has to endure from husband or father and may succeed in bearing with an unruffled spirit, if she be endowed with tact, patience, and a sense of humour. Mrs. Pitt had none of these qualities, and thus it was that both lives were marred. Moreover, as Sir John Bankes and Sir Robert Harley—both men of mark—have been of necessity cast into the shade by the far more interesting figures of their wives, it is only fair that one husband should have his turn. Lastly, it may be urged that Governor Pitt had to be introduced, like "the mock-bird" in Mrs. Trimmer's *Story of the Robins*, "for the sake of the moral."*

* "The mock-bird is properly a native of America, but is introduced here [in an English orchard] for the sake of the moral."

There was nothing exceptional about any of the women whose stories have now been told; even Elizabeth Fitzgerald's retort to the flag of truce may find its equivalent in history. All of us have known women as exasperating as Elizabeth, Countess of Rutland, as pleasure-loving as Bridget Noel, as superior as Lady Fenn, as courageous and as resourceful as Lady Savile or Lady Bankes. Although the shrewd, racy old gentlewoman who delighted the youth of our grandfathers is now almost an extinct type, here and there lingers a survivor whose conversation has a flavour that recalls Mrs. Ellenor Frere. The Brilliana Harley of to-day does not hold her castle against an armed foe; but she still has to see those whom she loves more than her life go forth to battle, and, "stirring up her womanish thoughts with a manly stomach," must give them heart for their conflict.

Taken as a whole, then, these are examples of the average woman—nothing more and nothing less. The least insignificant among them have obtained a few lines in the *Dictionary of National Biography*; the rest are altogether unremembered. Their circumstances were those of their times, and in no way peculiar to themselves. In one sense, this makes their lives less interesting. Of exceptional women who were separated from the common herd by character, position, and destiny—such as Margaret of Denmark, Joan of Arc, or Hedwig of Poland—we can never be weary; they stand out above and

away from their contemporaries, and have left traces behind them that have lasted until our time, and will last long after we have joined the majority. These others were everyday characters. But perhaps, also, it may be in their favour that they were so very like ourselves. Their troubles and joys were substantially the same as our own; some of us would have failed just as some of them failed, or conquered as they conquered. If we cannot be thrilled or awed, we can more readily sympathise.

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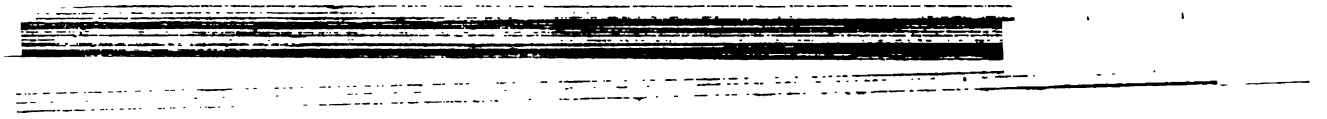

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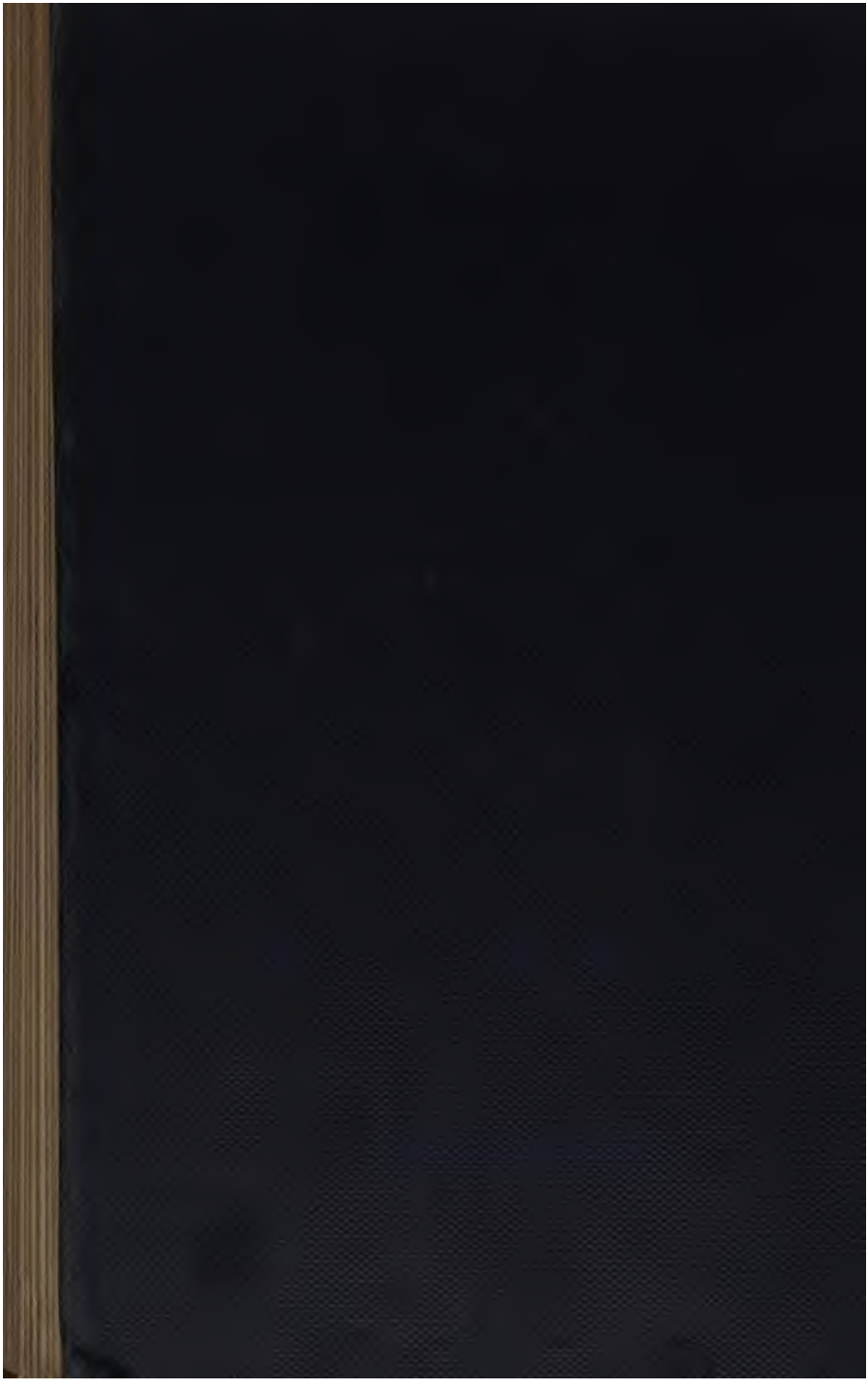
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